

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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The Claverings.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHAT WOULD MEN SAY OF YOU?



"ARRY, tell me the truth,—tell me all the truth." Harry Clavering was thus greeted when in obedience to the summons from Lady Ongar, he went to her almost immediately on his return to London.

It will be remembered that he had remained at Clavering some days after the departure of Hugh and Archie, lacking the courage to face his misfortunes boldly. But though his delay had been cowardly, it had not been easy to him to be a coward. He despised himself for not having written with warm full-expressed affection to Florence and with honest clear truth to Julia. Half his misery rose from

this feeling of self-abasement, and from the consciousness that he was weak, —piteously weak, exactly in that in which he had often boasted to himself that he was strong. But such inward boastings are not altogether bad. They preserve men from succumbing, and make at any rate some attempt

to realize themselves. The man who tells himself that he is brave, will struggle much before he flies; but the man who never does so tell himself, will find flying easy unless his heart be of nature very high. Now had come the moment either for flying, or not flying; and Harry swearing that he would stand his ground, resolutely took his hat and gloves, and made his way to Bolton Street with a sore heart.

But as he went he could not keep himself from arguing the matter within his own breast. He knew what was his duty. It was his duty to stick to Florence, not only with his word and his hand, but with his heart. It was his duty to tell Lady Ongar that not only his word was at Stratton, but his heart also, and to ask her pardon for the wrong that he had done her by that caress. For some ten minutes as he walked through the streets his resolve was strong to do this manifest duty; but, gradually, as he thought of that caress, as he thought of the difficulties of the coming interview, as he thought of Julia's high-toned beauty,—perhaps something also of her wealth and birth,—and more strongly still as he thought of her love for him, false, treacherous, selfish arguments offered themselves to his mind,—arguments which he knew to be false and selfish. Which of them did he love? Could it be right for him to give his hand without his heart? Could it really be good for Florence,—poor injured Florence, that she should be taken by a man who had ceased to regard her more than all other women? Were he to marry her now, would not that deceit be worse than the other deceit? Or, rather, would not that be deceitful, whereas the other course would simply be unfortunate,—unfortunate through circumstances for which he was blameless? Damnable arguments! False, cowardly logic, by which all male jilts seek to excuse their own treachery to themselves and to others!

Thus during the second ten minutes of his walk, his line of conduct became less plain to him, and as he entered Piccadilly he was racked with doubts. But instead of settling them in his mind he unconsciously allowed himself to dwell upon the words with which he would seek to excuse his treachery to Florence. He thought how he would tell her,—not to her face with spoken words, for that he could not do,—but with written skill, that he was unworthy of her goodness, that his love for her had fallen off through his own unworthiness, and had returned to one who was in all respects less perfect than she, but who in old days, as she well knew, had been his first love. Yes! he would say all this, and Julia, let her anger be what it might, should know that he had said it. As he planned this, there came to him a little comfort, for he thought there was something grand in such a resolution. Yes; he would do that, even though he should lose Julia also.

Miserable clap-trap! He knew in his heart that all his logic was false, and his arguments baseless. Cease to love Florence Burton! He had not ceased to love her, nor is the heart of any man made so like a weather-cock that it needs must turn itself hither and thither, as the wind directs, and be altogether beyond the man's control. For Harry, with all his

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faults, and in spite of his present falseness, was a man. No man ceases to love without a cause. No man need cease to love without a cause. A man may maintain his love, and nourish it, and keep it warm by honest manly effort, as he may his probity, his courage, or his honour. It was not that he had ceased to love Florence; but that the glare of the candle had been too bright for him and he had scorched his wings. After all, as to that embrace of which he had thought so much, and the memory of which was so sweet to him and so bitter,—it had simply been an accident. Thus, writing in his mind that letter to Florence which he knew, if he were an honest man, he would never allow himself to write, he reached Lady Ongar's door without having arranged for himself any special line of conduct.

We must return for a moment to the fact that Hugh and Archie had returned to town before Harry Clavering. How Archie had been engaged on great doings, the reader, I hope, will remember; and he may as well be informed here that the fifty pounds were duly taken to Mount Street, and were extracted from him by the spy without much difficulty. I do not know that Archie in return obtained any immediate aid or valuable information from Sophie Gordeloup; but Sophie did obtain some information from him which she found herself able to use for her own purposes. As his position with reference to love and marriage was being discussed, and the position also of the divine Julia, Sophie hinted her fear of another Clavering lover. What did Archie think of his cousin Harry? "Why; he's engaged to another girl," said Archie, opening wide his eyes and his mouth, and becoming very free with his information. This was a matter to which Sophie found it worth her while to attend, and she soon learned from Archie all that Archie knew about Florence Burton. And this was all that could be known. No secret had been made in the family of Harry's engagement. Archie told his fair assistant that Miss Burton had been received at Clavering Park openly as Harry's future wife, and, "by Jove, you know, he can't be coming it with Julia after that, you know." Sophie made a little grimace, but did not say much. She, remembering that she had caught Lady Ongar in Harry's arms, thought that, "by Jove," he might be coming it with Julia, even after Miss Burton's reception at Clavering Park. Then, too, she remembered some few words that had passed between her and her dear Julia after Harry's departure on the evening of the embrace, and perceived that Julia was in ignorance of the very existence of Florence Burton, even though Florence had been received at the Park. This was information worth having,—information to be used! Her respect for Harry rose immeasurably. She had not given him credit for so much audacity, so much gallantry, and so much skill. She had thought him to be a pigheaded Clavering, like the rest of them. He was not pigheaded; he was a promising young man; she could have liked him and perhaps aided him,—only that he had shown so strong a determination to have nothing to do with her. Therefore the information should be used;—and it was used.

The reader will now understand what was the truth which Lady Ongar demanded from Harry Clavering. "Harry, tell me the truth; tell me all the truth." She had come forward to meet him in the middle of the room when she spoke these words, and stood looking him in the face, not having given him her hand.

"What truth?" said Harry. "Have I ever told you a lie?" But he knew well what was the truth required of him.

"Lies can be acted as well as told. Harry, tell me all at once. Who is Florence Burton; who and what?" She knew it all, then, and things had settled themselves for him without the necessity of any action on his part. It was odd enough that she should not have learned it before, but at any rate she knew it now. And it was well that she should have been told;—only how was he to excuse himself for that embrace? "At any rate speak to me," she said, standing quite erect, and looking as a Juno might have looked. "You will acknowledge at least that I have a right to ask the question. Who is this Florence Burton?"

"She is the daughter of Mr. Burton of Stratton."

"And is that all that you can tell me? Come, Harry, be braver than that. I was not such a coward once with you. Are you engaged to marry her?"

"Yes, Lady Ongar, I am."

"Then you have had your revenge on me, and now we are quits." So saying, she stepped back from the middle of the room, and sat herself down on her accustomed seat. He was left there standing, and it seemed as though she intended to take no further notice of him. He might go if he pleased, and there would be an end of it all. The difficulty would be over, and he might at once write to Florence in what language he liked. It would simply be a little episode in his life, and his escape would not have been arduous.

But he could not go from her in that way. He could not bring himself to leave the room without some further word. She had spoken of revenge. Was it not incumbent on him to explain to her that there had been no revenge; that he had loved, and suffered, and forgiven without one thought of anger;—and that then he had unfortunately loved again? Must he not find some words in which to tell her that she had been the light, and he simply the poor moth that had burned his wings?

"No, Lady Ongar," said he, "there has been no revenge."

"We will call it justice, if you please. At any rate I do not mean to complain."

"If you ever injured me——" he began.

"I did injure you," said she, sharply.

"If you ever injured me, I forgave you freely."

"I did injure you——" As she spoke she rose again from her seat, showing how impossible to her was that tranquillity which she had attempted to maintain. "I did injure you, but the injury came to you early in life, and sat lightly on you. Within a few months you had learned to love this young lady at the place you went to,—the first young

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lady you saw ! I had not done you much harm, Harry. But that which you have done me, cannot be undone."

"Julia," he said, coming up to her.

"No ; not Julia. When you were here before I asked you to call me so, hoping, longing, believing,—doing more, so much more than I could have done, but that I thought my love might now be of service to you. You do not think that I had heard of this then ?"

"Oh, no."

"No. It is odd that I should not have known it, as I now hear that she was at my sister's house ; but all others have not been as silent as you have been. We are quits, Harry ; that is all that I have to say. We are quits now."

"I have intended to be true to you ;—to you and to her."

"Were you true when you acted as you did the other night ?" He could not explain to her how greatly he had been tempted. "Were you true when you held me in your arms as that woman came in ? Had you not made me think that I might glory in loving you, and that I might show her that I scorned her when she thought to promise me her secrecy ;—her secrecy, as though I were ashamed of what she had seen. I was not ashamed,—not then. Had all the world known it, I should not have been ashamed. 'I have loved him long,' I should have said, 'and him only. He is to be my husband, and now at last I need not be ashamed.' " So much she spoke, standing up, looking at him with firm face, and uttering her syllables with a quick clear voice ; but at the last word there came a quiver in her tone, and the strength of her countenance quailed, and there was a tear which made dim her eye, and she knew that she could no longer stand before him. She endeavoured to seat herself with composure ; but the attempt failed, and as she fell back upon the sofa he just heard the sob which had cost her so great and vain an effort to restrain. In an instant he was kneeling at her feet, and grasping at the hand with which she was hiding her face. "Julia," he said, "look at me ; let us at any rate understand each other at last."

"No, Harry ; there must be no more such knowledge,—no more such understanding. You must go from me, and come here no more. Had it not been for that other night, I would still have endeavoured to regard you as a friend. But I have no right to such friendship. I have sinned and gone astray, and am a thing vile and polluted. I sold myself, as a beast is sold, and men have treated me as I treated myself."

"Have I treated you so ?"

"Yes, Harry ; you, you. How did you treat me when you took me in your arms and kissed me,—knowing, knowing that I was not to be your wife ? O God, I have sinned. I have sinned, and I am punished."

"No, no," said he, rising from his knees, "it was not as you say."

"Then how was it, sir ? Is it thus that you treat other women ;—your friends, those to whom you declare friendship ? What did you mean me to think ?"

"That I loved you."

"Yes; with a love that should complete my disgrace,—that should finish my degradation. But I had not heard of this Florence Burton; and, Harry, that night I was so happy in my bed. And in that next week when you were down there for that sad ceremony, I was happy here, happy and proud. Yes, Harry, I was so proud when I thought that you still loved me,—loved me in spite of my past sin, that I almost forgot that I was polluted. You have made me remember it, and I shall not forget it again."

It would have been better for him had he gone away at once. Now he was sitting in a chair sobbing violently, and pressing away the tears from his cheeks with his hands. How could he make her understand that he had intended no insult when he embraced her? Was it not incumbent on him to tell her that the wrong he then did was done to Florence Burton, and not to her? But his agony was too much for him at present, and he could find no words in which to speak to her.

"I said to myself that you would come when the funeral was over, and I wept for poor Hermys as I thought that my lot was so much happier than hers. But people have what they deserve, and Hermys, who has done no such wrong as I have done, is not crushed as I am crushed. It was just, Harry, that the punishment should come from you, but it has come very heavily."

"Julia, it was not meant to be so."

"Well; we will let that pass. I cannot unsay, Harry, all that I have said;—all that I did not say, but which you must have thought and known when you were here last. I cannot bid you believe that I do not—love you."

"Not more tenderly or truly than I love you."

"Nay, Harry, your love to me can be neither true nor tender,—nor will I permit it to be offered to me. You do not think I would rob that girl of what is hers. Mine for you may be both tender and true; but, alas, truth has come to me when it can avail me no longer."

"Julia, if you will say that you love me, it shall avail you."

"In saying that, you are continuing to ill-treat me. Listen to me now. I hardly know when it began, for, at first, I did not expect that you would forgive me and let me be dear to you as I used to be; but as you sat here, looking up into my face in the old way, it came on me gradually,—the feeling that it might be so; and I told myself that if you would take me I might be of service to you, and I thought that I might forgive myself at last for possessing this money if I could throw it into your lap, so that you might thrive with it in the world; and I said to myself that it might be well to wait awhile, till I should see whether you really loved me; but then came that burst of passion, and though I knew that you were wrong, I was proud to feel that I was still so dear to you. It is all over. We understand each other at last, and you may go. There is nothing to be forgiven between us."

He had now resolved that Florence must go by the board. If Julia would still take him she should be his wife, and he would face Florence and all the Burtons, and his own family, and all the world in the matter of his treachery. What would he care what the world might say? His treachery to Florence was a thing completed. Now, at this moment, he felt himself to be so devoted to Julia as to make him regard his engagement to Florence as one which must, at all hazards, be renounced. He thought of his mother's sorrow, of his father's scorn,—of the dismay with which Fanny would hear concerning him a tale which she would believe to be so impossible; he thought of Theodore Burton, and the deep, unquenchable anger of which that brother was capable, and of Cecilia and her outraged kindness; he thought of the infamy which would be attached to him, and resolved that he must bear it all. Even if his own heart did not move him so to act, how could he hinder himself from giving comfort and happiness to this woman who was before him? Injury, wrong, and broken-hearted wretchedness, he could not prevent; but, therefore, this part was as open to him as the other. Men would say that he had done this for Lady Ongar's money; and the indignation with which he was able to regard this false accusation,—for his mind declared such accusation to be damnably false,—gave him some comfort. People might say of him what they pleased. He was about to do the best within his power. Bad, alas, was the best, but it was of no avail now to think of that.

"Julia," he said, "between us at least there shall be nothing to be forgiven."

"There is nothing," said she.

"And there shall be no broken love. I am true to you now,—as ever."

"And, what, then, of your truth to Miss Florence Burton?"

"It will not be for you to rebuke me with that. We have, both of us, played our game badly, but not for that reason need we both be ruined and broken-hearted. In your folly you thought that wealth was better than love; and I, in my folly,—I thought that one love blighted might be mended by another. When I asked Miss Burton to be my wife you were the wife of another man. Now that you are free again I cannot marry Miss Burton."

"You must marry her, Harry."

"There shall be no must in such a case. You do not know her, and cannot understand how good, how perfect she is. She is too good to take a hand without a heart."

"And what would men say of you?"

"I must bear what men say. I do not suppose that I shall be all happy,—not even with your love. When things have once gone wrong they cannot be mended without showing the patches. But yet men stay the hand of ruin for a while, tinkering here and putting in a nail there, stitching and cobbling; and so things are kept together. It must be so

for you and me. Give me your hand, Julia, for I have never deceived you, and you need not fear that I shall do so now. Give me your hand, and say that you will be my wife."

"No, Harry; not your wife. I do not, as you say, know that perfect girl, but I will not rob one that is so good."

"You are bound to me, Julia. You must do as I bid you. You have told me that you love me; and I have told you,—and I tell you now, that I love none other as I love you;—have never loved any other as I have loved you. Give me your hand." Then, coming to her, he took her hand, while she sat with her face averted from him. "Tell me that you will be my wife." But she would not say the words. She was less selfish than he, and was thinking,—was trying to think what might be best for them all, but, above all, what might be best for him. "Speak to me," he said, "and acknowledge that you wronged me when you thought that the expression of my love was an insult to you."

"It is easy to say, speak. What shall I say?"

"Say that you will be my wife."

"No,—I will not say it." She rose again from her chair, and took her hand away from him. "I will not say it. Go now and think over all that you have done; and I also will think of it. God help me. What evil comes, when evil has been done! But, Harry, I understand you now, and I at least will blame you no more. Go and see Florence Burton; and if, when you see her, you find that you can love her, take her to your heart, and be true to her. You shall never hear another reproach from me. Go now, go; there is nothing more to be said."

He paused a moment as though he were going to speak, but he left the room without another word. As he went along the passage and turned on the stairs he saw her standing at the door of the room, looking at him, and it seemed that her eyes were imploring him to be true to her in spite of the words that she had spoken. "And I will be true to her," he said to himself. "She was the first that I ever loved, and I will be true to her."

He went out, and for an hour or two wandered about the town, hardly knowing whither his steps were taking him. There had been a tragic seriousness in what had occurred to him this evening, which seemed to cover him with care, and make him feel that his youth was gone from him. At any former period of his life his ears would have tingled with pride to hear such a woman as Lady Ongar speak of her love for him in such terms as she had used; but there was no room now for pride in his bosom. Now at least he thought nothing of her wealth or rank. He thought of her as a woman between whom and himself there existed so strong a passion as to make it impossible that he should marry another, even though his duty plainly required it. The grace and graciousness of his life were over; but love still remained to him, and of that he must make the most. All others whom he regarded would revile him, and now he must live for this woman alone. She had said that she had injured him.

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Yes, indeed, she had injured him! She had robbed him of his high character, of his unclouded brow, of that self-pride which had so often told him that he was living a life without reproach among men. She had brought him to a state in which misery must be his bedfellow, and disgrace his companion;—but still she loved him, and to that love he would be true.

And as to Florence Burton;—how was he to settle matters with her? That letter for which he had been preparing the words as he went to Bolton Street, before the necessity for it had become irrevocable, did not now appear to him to be very easy. At any rate he did not attempt it on that night.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MAN WHO DUSTED HIS BOOTS WITH HIS HANDKERCHIEF.

WHEN Florence Burton had written three letters to Harry without receiving a word in reply to either of them, she began to be seriously unhappy. The last of these letters, received by him after the scene described in the last chapter, he had been afraid to read. It still remained unopened in his pocket. But Florence, though she was unhappy, was not even yet jealous. Her fears did not lie in that direction, nor had she naturally any tendency to such uneasiness. He was ill, she thought; or if not ill in health, then ill at ease. Some trouble afflicted him of which he could not bring himself to tell her the facts, and as she thought of this she remembered her own stubbornness on the subject of their marriage, and blamed herself in that she was not now with him, to comfort him. If such comfort would avail him anything now, she would be stubborn no longer. When the third letter brought no reply she wrote to her sister-in-law, Mrs. Burton, confessing her uneasiness, and begging for comfort. Surely Cecilia could not but see him occasionally,—or at any rate have the power of seeing him. Or Theodore might do so,—as of course he would be at the office. If anything ailed him would Cecilia tell her all the truth? But Cecilia, when she began to fear that something did ail him, did not find it very easy to tell Florence all the truth.

But there was jealousy at Stratton, though Florence was not jealous. Old Mrs. Burton had become alarmed, and was ready to tear the eyes out of Harry Clavering's head if Harry should be false to her daughter. This was a misfortune of which, with all her brood, Mrs. Burton had as yet known nothing. No daughter of hers had been misused by any man, and no son of hers had ever misused any one's daughter. Her children had gone out into the world steadily, prudently, making no brilliant marriages, but never falling into any mistakes. She heard of such misfortunes around her,—that a young lady here had loved in vain, and that a young lady there had been left to wear the willow; but such sorrows had

never visited her roof, and she was disposed to think,—and perhaps to say,—that the fault lay chiefly in the imprudence of mothers. What if at last, when her work in this line had been so nearly brought to a successful close, misery and disappointment should come also upon her lamb! In such case Mrs. Burton, we may say, was a ewe who would not see her lamb suffer without many bleatings and considerable exercise of her maternal energies.

And tidings had come to Mrs. Burton which had not as yet been allowed to reach Florence's ears. In the office at the Adelphi was one Mr. Walliker, who had a younger brother now occupying that desk in Mr. Burton's office which had belonged to Harry Clavering. Through Bob Walliker, Mrs. Burton learned that Harry did not come to the office even when it was known that he had returned to London from Clavering;—and she also learned at last that the young men in the office were connecting Harry Clavering's name with that of the rich and noble widow, Lady Ongar. Then Mrs. Burton wrote to her son Theodore, as Florence had written to Theodore's wife.

Mrs. Burton, though she had loved Harry dearly, and had perhaps in many respects liked him better than any of her sons-in-law, had, nevertheless, felt some misgivings from the first. Florence was brighter, better educated, and cleverer than her elder sisters, and therefore when it had come to pass that she was asked in marriage by a man somewhat higher in rank and softer in manners than they who had married her sisters, there had seemed to be some reason for the change;—but Mrs. Burton had felt that it was a ground for apprehension. High rank and soft manners may not always belong to a true heart. At first she was unwilling to hint this caution even to herself; but at last, as her suspicions grew, she spoke the words very frequently, not only to herself but also to her husband. Why, oh why, had she let into her house any man differing in mode of life from those whom she had known to be honest and good? How would her gray hairs be made to go in sorrow to the grave, if, after all her old prudence and all her old success, her last pet lamb should be returned to the mother's side, ill-used, maimed, and blighted!

Theodore Burton, when he received his mother's letter, had not seen Harry since his return from Clavering. He had been inclined to be very angry with him for his long and unannounced absence from the office. "He will do no good," he had said to his wife. "He does not know what real work means." But his anger turned to disgust as regarded Harry, and almost to despair as regarded his sister, when Harry had been a week in town, and yet had not shown himself at the Adelphi. But at this time Theodore Burton had heard no word of Lady Ongar, though the clerks in the office had that name daily in their mouths. "Cannot you go to him, Theodore?" said his wife. "It is very easy to say go to him," he replied. "If I made it my business I could, of course, go to him, and no doubt find him if I was determined to do so;—but what more could I do? I

can lead a horse to the water, but I cannot make him drink." "You could speak to him of Florence." "That is such a woman's idea," said the husband. "When every proper incentive to duty and ambition has failed him, he is to be brought into the right way by the mention of a girl's name!" "May I see him?" Cecilia urged. "Yes,—if you can catch him; but I do not advise you to try."

After that came the two letters for the husband and wife, each of which was shown to the other; and then for the first time did either of them receive the idea that Lady Ongar with her fortune might be a cause of misery to their sister. "I don't believe a word of it," said Cecilia, whose cheeks were burning, half with shame and half with anger. Harry had been such a pet with her,—had already been taken so closely to her heart as a brother! "I should not have suspected him of that kind of baseness," said Theodore, very slowly. "He is not base," said Cecilia. "He may be idle and foolish, but he is not base."

"I must at any rate go after him now," said Theodore. "I don't believe this;—I won't believe it. I do not believe it. But if it should be true —!"

"Oh, Theodore."

"I do not think it is true. It is not the kind of weakness I have seen in him. He is weak and vain, but I should have said that he was true."

"I am sure he is true."

"I think so. I cannot say more than that I think so."

"You will write to your mother?"

"Yes."

"And may I ask Florence to come up? Is it not always better that people should be near to each other when they are engaged?"

"You can ask her, if you like. I doubt whether she will come."

"She will come if she thinks that anything is amiss with him."

Cecilia wrote immediately to Florence, pressing her invitation in the strongest terms that she could use. "I tell you the whole truth," she said. "We have not seen him, and this, of course, has troubled us very greatly. I feel quite sure he would come to us if you were here; and this, I think, should bring you, if no other consideration does so. Theodore imagines that he has become simply idle, and that he is ashamed to show himself here because of that. It may be that he has some trouble with reference to his own home, of which we know nothing. But if he has any such trouble, you ought to be made aware of it, and I feel sure that he would tell you if you were here." Much more she said, arguing in the same way, and pressing Florence to come to London.

Mr. Burton did not at once send a reply to his mother, but he wrote the following note to Harry:—

Adelphi —, May, 186—

"MY DEAR CLAVERING,—I have been sorry to notice your continued absence from the office, and both Cecilia and I have been very sorry that

you have discontinued coming to us. But I should not have written to you on this matter, not wishing to interfere in your own concerns, had I not desired to see you specially with reference to my sister. As I have that to say to you concerning her which I can hardly write, will you make an appointment with me here, or at my house? Or, if you cannot do that, will you say when I shall find you at home? If you will come and dine with us we shall like that best, and leave you to name an early day: to-morrow, or the next day, or the day after.

"Very truly yours,

"THEODORE BURTON."

When Cecilia's letter reached Stratton, and another post came without any letter from Harry, poor Florence's heart sank low in her bosom. "Well, my dear," said Mrs. Burton, who watched her daughter anxiously while she was reading the letter. Mrs. Burton had not told Florence of her own letter to her son; and now, having herself received no answer, looked to obtain some reply from that which her daughter-in-law had sent.

"Cecilia wants me to go to London," said Florence.

"Is there anything the matter that you should go just now?"

"Not exactly the matter, mamma; but you can see the letter."

Mrs. Burton read it slowly, and felt sure that much was the matter. She knew that Cecilia would have written in that strain only under the influence of some great alarm. At first she was disposed to think that she herself would go to London. She was eager to know the truth,—eager to utter her loud maternal bleatings if any wrong were threatened to her lamb. Florence might go with her, but she longed herself to be on the field of action. She felt that she could almost annihilate any man by her words and looks who would dare to ill-treat a girl of hers.

"Well, mamma;—what do you think?"

"I don't know yet, my dear. I will speak to your papa before dinner." But as Mrs. Burton had been usually autocratic in the management of her own daughters, Florence was aware that her mother simply required a little time before she made up her mind. "It is not that I want to go to London—for the pleasure of it, mamma."

"I know that, my dear."

"Nor yet merely to see him!—though of course I do long to see him!"

"Of course you do;—why shouldn't you?"

"But Cecilia is so very prudent, and she thinks that it will be better. And she would not have pressed it, unless Theodore had thought so too!"

"I thought Theodore would have written to me!"

"But he writes so seldom."

"I expected a letter from him now, as I had written to him."

"About Harry, do you mean?"

"Well;—yes. I did not mention it, as I was aware I might make you uneasy. But I saw that you were unhappy at not hearing from him."

"Oh, mamma, do let me go."

"Of course you shall go if you wish it;—but let me speak to papa before anything is quite decided."

Mrs. Burton did speak to her husband, and it was arranged that Florence should go up to Onslow Crescent. But Mrs. Burton, though she had been always autocratic about her unmarried daughters, had never been autocratic about herself. When she hinted that she also might go, she saw that the scheme was not approved, and she at once abandoned it. "It would look as if we were all afraid," said Mr. Burton, "and after all what does it come to?—a young gentleman does not write to his sweetheart for two or three weeks. I used to think myself the best lover in the world, if I wrote once a month."

"There was no penny post then, Mr. Burton."

"And I often wish there was none now," said Mr. Burton. That matter was therefore decided, and Florence wrote back to her sister-in-law, saying that she would go up to London on the third day from that. In the meantime, Harry Clavering and Theodore Burton had met.

Has it ever been the lot of any unmarried male reader of these pages, to pass three or four days in London, without anything to do,—to have to get through them by himself,—and to have that burden on his shoulder, with the additional burden of some terrible, wearing misery, away from which there seems to be no road, and out of which there is apparently no escape? That was Harry Clavering's condition for some few days after the evening which he last passed in the company of Lady Ongar,—and I will ask any such unmarried man whether, in such a plight, there was for him any other alternative, but to wish himself dead? In such a condition, a man can simply walk the streets by himself, and declare to himself that everything is bad, and rotten, and vile, and worthless. He wishes himself dead, and calculates the different advantages of prussic acid and pistols. He may the while take his meals very punctually at his club, may smoke his cigars, and drink his bitter beer, or brandy-and-water;—but he is all the time wishing himself dead, and making that calculation as to the best way of achieving that desirable result. Such was Harry Clavering's condition now. As for his office, the doors of that place were absolutely closed against him, by the presence of Theodore Burton. When he attempted to read he could not understand a word, or sit for ten minutes with a book in his hand. No occupation was possible to him. He longed to go again to Bolton Street, but he did not even do that. If there, he could act only as though Florence had been deserted for ever;—and if he so acted he would be infamous for life. And yet he had sworn to Julia that such was his intention. He hardly dared to ask himself which of the two he loved. The misery of it all had become so heavy upon him, that he could take no pleasure in the thought of his love. It must always be all regret, all sorrow, and all remorse. Then there came upon

him the letter from Theodore Burton, and he knew that it was necessary that he should see the writer.

Nothing could be more disagreeable than such an interview, but he could not allow himself to be guilty of the cowardice of declining it. Of a personal quarrel with Burton he was not afraid. He felt, indeed, that he might almost find relief in the capability of being himself angry with any one. But he must positively make up his mind before such an interview. He must devote himself either to Florence or to Julia;—and he did not know how to abandon the one or the other. He had allowed himself to be so governed by impulse that he had pledged himself to Lady Ongar, and had sworn to her that he would be entirely hers. She, it is true, had not taken him altogether at his word, but not the less did he know,—did he think that he knew,—that she looked for the performance of his promise. And she had been the first that he had sworn to love!

In his dilemma he did at last go to Bolton Street, and there found that Lady Ongar had left town for three or four days. The servant said that she had gone, he believed, to the Isle of Wight; and that Madame Gordeloup had gone with her. She was to be back in town early in the following week. This was on a Thursday, and he was aware that he could not postpone his interview with Burton till after Julia's return. So he went to his club, and nailing himself as it were to the writing-table, made an appointment for the following morning. He would be with Burton at the Adelphi at twelve o'clock. He had been in trouble, he said, and that trouble had kept him from the office and from Onslow Crescent. Having written this, he sent it off, and then played billiards and smoked and dined, played more billiards and smoked and drank till the usual hours of the night had come. He was not a man who liked such things. He had not become what he was by passing his earlier years after this fashion. But his misery required excitement,—and billiards with tobacco were better than the desolation of solitude.

On the following morning he did not breakfast till near eleven. Why should he get up as long as it was possible to obtain the relief which was to be had from dozing? As far as possible he would not think of the matter till he had put his hat upon his head to go to the Adelphi. But the time for taking his hat soon came, and he started on his short journey. But even as he walked, he could not think of it. He was purposeless, as a ship without a rudder, telling himself that he could only go as the winds might direct him. How he did hate himself for his one weakness! And yet he hardly made an effort to overcome it. On one point only did he seem to have a resolve. If Burton attempted to use with him anything like a threat he would instantly resent it.

Punctually at twelve he walked into the outer office, and was told that Mr. Burton was in his room.

"Halloa, Clavering," said Walliker, who was standing with his back to

the fire, "I thought we had lost you for good and all. And here you are come back again!"

Harry had always disliked this man, and now hated him worse than ever. "Yes; I am here," said he, "for a few minutes; but I believe I need not trouble you."

"All right, old fellow," said Walliker; and then Harry passed through into the inner room.

"I am very glad to see you, Harry," said Burton, rising and giving his hand cordially to Clavering. "And I am sorry to hear that you have been in trouble. Is it anything in which we can help you?"

"I hope,—Mrs. Burton is well," said Harry, hesitating.

"Pretty well."

"And the children?"

"Quite well. They say you are a very bad fellow not to go and see them."

"I believe I am a bad fellow," said Harry.

"Sit down, Harry. It will be best to come at the point at once;—will it not? Is there anything wrong between you and Florence?"

"What do you mean by wrong?"

"I should call it very wrong,—hideously wrong, if after all that has passed between you, there should now be any doubt as to your affection for each other. If such doubt were now to arise with her, I should almost disown my sister."

"You will never have to blush for her."

"I think not. I thank God that hitherto there have been no such blushes among us. And I hope, Harry, that my heart may never have to bleed for her. Come, Harry, let me tell you all at once like an honest man. I hate subterfuges and secrets. A report has reached the old people at home,—not Florence, mind,—that you are untrue to Florence, and are passing your time with that lady who is the sister of your cousin's wife."

"What right have they to ask how I pass my time?"

"Do not be unjust, Harry. If you simply tell me that your visits to that lady imply no evil to my sister, I, knowing you to be a gentleman, will take your word for all that it can mean." He paused, and Harry hesitated and could not answer. "Nay, dear friend,—brother as we both of us have thought you,—come once more to Onslow Crescent and kiss the bairns, and kiss Cecilia, too, and sit with us at our table, and talk as you used to do, and I will ask no further question;—nor will she. Then you will come back here to your work, and your trouble will be gone, and your mind will be at ease; and, Harry, one of the best girls that ever gave her heart into a man's keeping will be there to worship you, and to swear when your back is turned that any one who says a word against you shall be no brother and no sister and no friend of hers."

And this was the man who had dusted his boots with his pocket-handkerchief, and whom Harry had regarded as being on that account hardly

fit to be his friend! He knew that the man was noble, and good, and generous, and true;—and knew also that in all that Burton said he simply did his duty as a brother. But not on that account was it the easier for him to reply.

"Say that you will come to us this evening," said Burton. "Even if you have an engagement, put it off."

"I have none," said Harry.

"Then say that you will come to us, and all will be well."

Harry understood of course that his compliance with this invitation would be taken as implying that all was right. It would be so easy to accept the invitation, and any other answer was so difficult! But yet he would not bring himself to tell the lie.

"Burton," he said, "I am in trouble."

"What is the trouble?" The man's voice was now changed, and so was the glance of his eye. There was no expression of anger,—none as yet; but the sweetness of his countenance was gone,—a sweetness that was unusual to him, but which still was at his command when he needed it.

"I cannot tell you all here. If you will let me come to you this evening I will tell you everything,—to you and to Cecilia too. Will you let me come?"

"Certainly. Will you dine with us?"

"No;—after dinner; when the children are in bed." Then he went, leaving on the mind of Theodore Burton an impression that though something was much amiss, his mother had been wrong in her fears respecting Lady Ongar.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FRESHWATER GATE.

COUNT PATEROFF, Sophie's brother, was a man who, when he had taken a thing in hand, generally liked to carry it through. It may perhaps be said that most men are of this turn of mind; but the count was, I think, especially eager in this respect. And as he was not one who had many irons in the fire, who made either many little efforts, or any great efforts after things altogether beyond his reach, he was justified in expecting success. As to Archie's courtship, any one who really knew the man and the woman, and who knew anything of the nature of women in general, would have predicted failure for him. Even with Doodle's aid he could not have a chance in the race. But when Count Pateroff entered himself for the same prize, those who knew him would not speak of his failure as a thing certain.

The prize was too great not to be attempted by so very prudent a gentleman. He was less impulsive in his nature than his sister, and did not open his eyes and talk with watering mouth of the seven thousands

of pounds a year; but in his quiet way he had weighed and calculated all the advantages to be gained, had even ascertained at what rate he could insure the lady's life, and had made himself certain that nothing in the deed of Lord Ongar's marriage-settlement entailed any pecuniary penalty on his widow's second marriage. Then he had gone down, as we know, to Ongar Park, and as he had walked from the lodge to the house and back again, he had looked around him complacently, and told himself that the place would do very well. For the English character, in spite of the pigheadedness of many Englishmen, he had,—as he would have said himself,—much admiration, and he thought that the life of a country gentleman, with a nice place of his own,—with such a very nice place of his own as was Ongar Park,—and so very nice an income, would suit him well in his declining years.

And he had certain advantages, certain aids towards his object, which had come to him from circumstances;—as, indeed, he had also certain disadvantages. He knew the lady, which was in itself much. He knew much of the lady's history, and had that cognisance of the saddest circumstances of her life, which in itself creates an intimacy. It is not necessary now to go back to those scenes which had disfigured the last months of Lord Ongar's life, but the reader will understand that what had then occurred gave the count a possible footing as a suitor. And the reader will also understand the disadvantages which had at this time already shown themselves in the lady's refusal to see the count.

It may be thought that Sophie's standing with Lady Ongar would be a great advantage to her brother; but I doubt whether the brother trusted either the honesty or the discretion of his sister. He would have been willing to purchase such assistance as she might give,—not in Archie's pleasant way, with bank-notes hidden under his glove,—but by acknowledgments for services to be turned into solid remuneration when the marriage should have taken place, had he not feared that Sophie might communicate the fact of such acknowledgments to the other lady,—making her own bargain in doing so. He had calculated all this, and had come to the conclusion that he had better make no direct proposal to Sophie; and when Sophie made a direct proposal to him, pointing out to him in glowing language all the fine things which such a marriage would give him, he had hardly vouchsafed to her a word of answer. "Very well," said Sophie to herself;—"very well. Then we both know what we are about."

Sophie herself would have kept Lady Ongar from marrying any one had she been able. Not even a brother's gratitude would be so serviceable to her as the generous kindness of a devoted friend. That she might be able both to sell her services to a lover, and also to keep Julie from marrying, was a lucky combination of circumstances which did not occur to her till Archie came to her with the money in his glove. That complicated game she was now playing, and was aware that Harry Clavering was

the great stumbling-block in her way. A woman even less clever than Sophie would have perceived that Lady Ongar was violently attached to Harry; and Sophie, when she did see it, thought that there was nothing left for her but to make her hay while the sun was yet shining. Then she heard the story of Florence Burton; and again she thought that Fortune was on her side. She told the story of Florence Burton, —with what result we know; and was quite sharp enough to perceive afterwards that the tale had had its intended effect,—even though her Julie had resolutely declined to speak either of Harry Clavering or of Florence Burton.

Count Pateroff had again called in Bolton Street, and had again been refused admittance. It was plain to him to see by the servant's manner that it was intended that he should understand that he was not to be admitted. Under such circumstances, it was necessary that he must either abandon his pursuit, or that he must operate upon Lady Ongar through some other feeling than her personal regard for himself. He might, perhaps, have trusted much to his own eloquence if he could have seen her; but how is a man to be eloquent in his wooing if he cannot see the lady whom he covets? There is, indeed, the penny post, but in these days of legal restraints, there is no other method of approaching an unwilling beauty. Forceful abduction is put an end to as regards Great Britain and Ireland. So the count had resort to the post.

His letter was very long, and shall not, therefore, be given to the reader. He began by telling Lady Ongar that she owed it to him for the good services he had done her, to read what he might say, and to answer him. He then gave her various reasons why she should see him, pleading, among other things, in language which she could understand, though the words were purposely as ambiguous as they could be made, that he had possessed and did possess the power of doing her a grievous injury, and that he had abstained, and—hoped that he might be able to abstain for the future. She knew that the words contained no threat,—that taken literally they were the reverse of a threat, and amounted to a promise,—but she understood also all that he had intended to imply. Long as his own letter was, he said nothing in it as to his suit, confining himself to a request that she should see him. But with his letter he sent her an enclosure longer than the letter itself, in which his wishes were clearly explained.

This enclosure purported to be an expression of Lord Ongar's wishes on many subjects, as they had been communicated to Count Pateroff in the latter days of the lord's life; but as the manuscript was altogether in the count's writing, and did not even pretend to have been subjected to Lord Ongar's eye, it simply amounted to the count's own story of their alleged conversations. There might have been no such conversations, or their tenour might have been very different from that which the count represented, or the statements and opinions, if expressed at all by Lord Ongar, might have been expressed at times when no statements or opinions

coming from him could be of any value. But as to these conversations, if they could have been verified as having come from Lord Ongar's mouth when he was in full possession of such faculties as he possessed,—all that would have amounted to nothing with Lady Ongar. To Lord Ongar alive she had owed obedience, and had been obedient. To Lord Ongar dead she owed no obedience, and would not be obedient.

Such would have been her feelings as to any document which could have reached her, purporting to contain Lord Ongar's wishes; but this document was of a nature which made her specially antagonistic to the exercise of any such marital authority from the grave. It was very long, and went into small details,—details which were very small; but the upshot of it all was a tendering of great thanks to Count Pateroff, and the expression of a strong wish that the count should marry his widow. "O. said that this would be the only thing for J.'s name." "O. said that this would be the safest course for his own honour." "O. said, as he took my hand, that in promising to take this step I gave him great comfort." "O. commissioned me to speak to J. in his name to this effect." The O. was of course Lord Ongar, and the J. was of course Julia. It was all in French, and went on in the same strain for many pages. Lady Ongar answered the letter as follows:—

"Lady Ongar presents her compliments to Count Pateroff, and begs to return the enclosed manuscript, which is, to her, perfectly valueless. Lady Ongar must still decline, and now more strongly than before, to receive Count Pateroff.

"Bolton Street, May 186—.

She was quite firm as she did this. She had no doubt at all on the matter. She did not feel that she wanted to ask for any advice. But she did feel that this count might still work her additional woe, that her cup of sorrow might not even yet be full, and that she was sadly,—sadly in want of love and protection. For aught she knew, the count might publish the whole statement, and people might believe that those words came from her husband, and that her husband had understood what would be best for her fame and for his honour. The whole thing was a threat, and not to save herself from any misery, would she have succumbed to a menace; but still it was possible that the threat might be carried out.

She was sorely in want of love and protection. At this time, when the count's letter reached her, Harry had been with her; and we know what had passed between them. She had bid him go to Florence,—and love Florence,—and marry Florence,—and leave her in her desolation. That had been her last command to him. But we all know what such commands mean. She had not been false in giving him these orders. She had intended it at the moment. The glow of self-sacrifice had been warm in her bosom,—and she had resolved to do without that which she

wanted in order that another might have it. But when she thought of it afterwards in her loneliness, she told herself that Florence Burton could not want Harry's love as she wanted it. There could not be such need to this girl, who possessed father and mother, and brothers, and youth, as there was to her, who had no other arm on which she could lean, besides that of the one man for whom she had acknowledged her love, and who had also declared his passion for her. She made no scheme to deprive Florence of her lover. In the long hours of her own solitude she never revoked, even within her own bosom, the last words she had said to Harry Clavering. But not the less did she hope that he might come to her again, and that she might learn from him that he had freed himself from that unfortunate engagement into which her falseness* to him had driven him.

It was after she had answered Count Pateroff's letter that she resolved to go out of town for three or four days. For some short time she had been minded to go away altogether, and not to return till after the autumn; but this scheme gradually diminished itself and fell away, till she determined that she would come back after three or four days. Then came to her Sophie,—her devoted Sophie,—Sophie whom she despised and hated; Sophie of whom she was so anxious to rid herself that in all her plans there was some little under-plot to that effect; Sophie whom she knew to be dishonest to her in any way that might make dishonesty profitable; and before Sophie had left her, Sophie had engaged herself to go with her dear friend to the Isle of Wight! As a matter of course, Sophie was to be franked on this expedition. On such expeditions Sophies are always franked as a matter of course. And Sophie would travel with all imaginable luxury,—a matter to which Sophie was by no means indifferent, though her own private life was conducted with an economy that was not luxurious. But, although all these good things came in Sophie's way, she contrived to make it appear that she was devoting herself in a manner that was almost sacrificial to the friend of her bosom. At the same time Lady Ongar sent a few words, as a message, to the count by his sister. Lady Ongar, having told to Madame Gordeloup the story of the document which had reached her, and having described her own answer, was much commended by her friend.

"You are quite right, dear, quite. Of course I am fond of my brother. Edouard and I have always been the best of friends. But that does not make me think you ought to give yourself to him. Bah! Why should a woman give away everything? Edouard is a fine fellow. But what is that? Fine fellows like to have all the money themselves."

"Will you tell him,—from me," said Lady Ongar, "that I will take it as a kindness on his part if he will abstain from coming to my house. I certainly shall not see him with my own consent."

Sophie promised,—and probably gave the message; but when she also

informed Edouard of Lady Ongar's intended visit to the Isle of Wight, telling him the day on which they were going and the precise spot, with the name of the hotel at which they were to stay, she went a little beyond the commission which her dearest friend had given her.

At the western end of the Isle of Wight, and on the further shore, about three miles from the point of the island which we call the Needles, there is a little break in the cliff, known to all stay-at-home English travellers as Freshwater Gate. Here there is a cluster of cottages and two inns, and a few bathing-boxes, and ready access by easy ascents to the breezy downs on either side, over which the sea air blows with all its salt and wholesome sweetness. At one of these two inns Lady Ongar located herself and Sophie; and all Freshwater, and all Yarmouth, and all that end of the island were alive to the fact that the rich widowed countess respecting whom such strange tales were told, had come on a visit to these parts. Innkeepers like such visitors. The more venomous are the stories told against them, the more money are they apt to spend, and the less likely are they to examine their bills. A rich woman altogether without a character is a mine of wealth to an innkeeper. In the present case no such godsend had come in the way,—but there was supposed to be a something a little odd, and the visitor was on that account the more welcome.

Sophie was not the most delightful companion in the world for such a place. London was her sphere, as she herself had understood when declaiming against those husbands who keep their wives in the country. And she had no love for the sea specially, regarding all winds as nuisances excepting such as had been raised by her own efforts, and thinking that salt from a saltcellar was more convenient than that brought to her on the breezes. It was now near the end of May, but she had not been half an hour at the inn before she was loud in demanding a fire,—and when the fire came she was unwilling to leave it. Her gesture was magnificent when Lady Ongar proposed to her that she should bathe. What,—put her own dear little dry body, by her own will, into the cold sea! She shrugged herself, and shook herself, and without speaking a word declined with so much eloquence that it was impossible not to admire her. Nor would she walk. On the first day, during the warmest part of the day, she allowed herself to be taken out in a carriage belonging to the inn; but after her drive she clung to the fire, and consumed her time with a French novel.

Nor was Lady Ongar much more comfortable in the Isle of Wight than she had been in London. The old poet told us how Black Care sits behind the horseman, and some modern poet will some day describe to us that terrible goddess as she takes her place with the stoker close to the fire of the locomotive engine. Sitting with Sophie opposite to her, Lady Ongar was not happy, even though her eye rested on the lines of that magnificent coast. Once indeed, on the evening of their first day,

Sophie left her, and she was alone for nearly an hour. Ah, how happy could she have been if Harry Clavering might have been there with her. Perhaps a day might come in which Harry might bring her there. In such a case *Atra Cura* would be left behind, and then she might be altogether happy. She sat dreaming of this for above an hour, and Sophie was still away. When Sophie returned, which she did all too soon, she explained that she had been in her bedroom. She had been very busy, and now had come down to make herself comfortable.

On the next evening Lady Ongar declared her intention of going up on the downs by herself. They had dined at five, so that she might have a long evening, and soon after six she started. "If I do not break down I will get as far as the Needles," she said. Sophie, who had heard that the distance was three miles, lifted up her hands in despair. "If you are not back before nine I shall send the people after you." Consenting to this with a laugh, Lady Ongar made her way up to the downs, and walked steadily on towards the extreme point of the island. To the Needles themselves she did not make her way. These rocks are now approached, as all the stay-at-home travellers know, through a fort, and down to the fort she did not go. But turning a little from the highest point of the hill towards the cliffs on her left hand, she descended till she reached a spot from which she could look down on the pebbly beach lying some three hundred feet below her, and on the soft shining ripple of the quiet waters as they moved themselves with a pleasant sound on the long strand which lay stretched in a line from the spot beneath her out to the point of the island. The evening was warm, and almost transparent in its clearness, and very quiet. There was no sound even of a breeze. When she seated herself close upon the margin of the cliff, she heard the small waves moving the stones which they washed, and the sound was as the sound of little children's voices, very distant. Looking down, she could see through the wonderful transparency of the water, and the pebbles below it were bright as diamonds, and the sands were burnished like gold. And each tiny silent wavelet as it moved up towards the shore and lost itself at last in its own effort, stretched itself the whole length of the strand. Such brightness on the sea-shore she had never seen before, nor had she ever listened as now she listened to that infantine babble of the baby waves. She sat there close upon the margin, on a seat of chalk which the winds had made, looking, listening, and forgetting for a while that she was Lady Ongar whom people did not know, who lived alone in the world with Sophie Gordeloup for her friend,—and whose lover was betrothed to another woman. She had been there perhaps half-an-hour, and had learned to be at home on her perch, sitting there in comfort, with no desire to move, when a voice which she well knew at the first sound startled her, and she rose quickly to her feet. "Lady Ongar," said the voice, "are you not rather near the edge?" As she turned round there was Count Pateroff with his

hand already upon her dress, so that no danger might be produced by the suddenness of his speech.

"There is nothing to fear," she said, stepping back from her seat. As she did so, he dropped his hand from her dress, and, raising it to his head, lifted his hat from his forehead. "You will excuse me, I hope, Lady Ongar," he said, "for having taken this mode of speaking to you."

"I certainly shall not excuse you ; nor, further than I can help it, shall I listen to you."

"There are a few words which I must say."

"Count Pateroff, I beg that you will leave me. This is treacherous and unmanly,—and can do you no good. By what right do you follow me here ?"

"I follow you for your own good, Lady Ongar ; I do it that you may hear me say a few words that are necessary for you to hear."

"I will hear no words from you,—that is, none willingly. By this time you ought to know me and to understand me." She had begun to walk up the hill very rapidly, and for a moment or two he had thought that she would escape him ; but her breath had soon failed her, and she found herself compelled to stand while he regained his place beside her. This he had not done without an effort, and for some minutes they were both silent. "It is very beautiful," at last he said, pointing away over the sea.

"Yes ;—it is very beautiful," she answered. "Why did you disturb me when I was so happy ?" But the count was still recovering his breath and made no answer to this question. When, however, she attempted to move on again, still breasting the hill, he put his hand upon her arm very gently.

"Lady Ongar," he said, "you must listen to me for a moment. Why not do it without a quarrel ?"

"If you mean that I cannot escape from you, it is true enough."

"Why should you want to escape ? Did I ever hurt you ? Before this have I not protected you from injury ?"

"No ;—never. You protect me !"

"Yes ;—I ; from your husband, from yourself, and from the world. You do not know,—not yet, all that I have done for you. Did you read what Lord Ongar had said ?"

"I read what it pleased you to write."

"What it pleased me ! Do you pretend to think that Lord Ongar did not speak as he speaks there ? Do you not know that those were his own words ? Do you not recognize them ? Ah, yes, Lady Ongar ; you know them to be true."

"Their truth or falsehood is nothing to me. They are altogether indifferent to me either way."

"That would be very well if it were possible ; but it is not. There ;

now we are at the top, and it will be easier. Will you let me have the honour to offer you my arm? No! Be it so; but I think you would walk the easier. It would not be for the first time."

"That is a falsehood." As she spoke she stepped before him, and looked into his face with eyes full of passion. "That is a positive falsehood. I never walked with a hand resting on your arm."

There came over his face the pleasantest smile as he answered her. "You forget everything," he said;—"everything. But it does not matter. Other people will not forget. Julie, you had better take me for your husband. You will be better as my wife, and happier, than you can be otherwise."

"Look down there, Count Pateroff;—down to the edge. If my misery is too great to be borne, I can escape from it there on better terms than you propose to me."

"Ah! That is what we call poetry. Poetry is very pretty, and in saying this as you do, you make yourself divine. But to be dashed over the cliffs and broken on the rocks;—in prose it is not so well."

"Sir, will you allow me to pass on while you remain; or will you let me rest here, while you return alone?"

"No, Julie; not so. I have found you with too much difficulty. In London, you see, I could not find you. Here, for a minute, you must listen to me. Do you not know, Julie, that your character is in my hands?"

"In your hands? No;—never; thank God, never. But what if it were?"

"Only this,—that I am forced to play the only game that you leave open to me. Chance-brought you and me together in such a way that nothing but marriage can be beneficial to either of us;—and I swore to Lord Ongar that it should be so. I mean that it shall be so,—or that you shall be punished for your misconduct to him and to me."

"You are both insolent and false. But listen to me, since you are here and I cannot avoid you. I know what your threats mean."

"I have never threatened you. I have promised you my aid, but have used no threats."

"Not when you tell me that I shall be punished? But to avoid no punishment, if any be in your power, will I ever willingly place myself in your company. You may write of me what papers you please, and repeat of me whatever stories you may choose to fabricate, but you will not frighten me into compliance by doing so. I have, at any rate, spirit enough to resist such attempts as that."

"As you are living at present, you are alone in the world?"

"And I am content to remain alone."

"You are thinking, then, of no second marriage?"

"If I were, does that concern you? But I will speak no further word to you. If you follow me into the inn, or persecute me further by

forcing yourself upon me, I will put myself under the protection of the police."

Having said this, she walked on as quickly as her strength would permit, while he walked by her side, urging upon her his old arguments as to Lord Ongar's expressed wishes, as to his own efforts on her behalf,—and at last as to the strong affection with which he regarded her. But she kept her promise, and said not a word in answer to it all. For more than an hour they walked side by side, and during the greater part of that time not a syllable escaped from her. From moment to moment she kept her eye warily on him, fearing that he might take her by the arm, or attempt some violence with her. But he was too wise for this, and too fully conscious that no such proceeding on his part could be of any service to him. He continued, however, to speak to her words which she could not avoid hearing,—hoping rather than thinking that he might at last frighten her by a description of all the evil which it was within his power to do her. But in acting thus he showed that he knew nothing of her character. She was not a woman whom any prospect of evil could possibly frighten into a distasteful marriage.

Within a few hundred yards of the hotel there is another fort, and at this point the path taken by Lady Ongar led into the private grounds of the inn at which she was staying. Here the count left her, raising his hat as he did so, and saying that he hoped to see her again before she left the island.

"If you do so," said she, "it shall be in presence of those who can protect me." And so they parted.

Clough's Life and Poems.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH was born at Liverpool in 1819. His lineage was of some antiquity and distinction; among his ancestors he counted a great-granddaughter of Henry VII. Not long before his birth his father, the third son of a family of ten children, left the Welsh valleys in which the Cloughs had been established for about three centuries, and settled as a merchant in Liverpool. When Arthur was four years old the whole family removed to Charleston in South America, where his childhood was passed in close companionship with his mother. Mrs. Clough seems to have been a remarkable woman. She laid in her son's character the foundation of that earnestness and sense of duty which was afterwards to be developed by the influence of Dr. Arnold. In this respect Arthur Clough formed no exception to the rule that great mothers are most important in the formation of great men. "She had no love of beauty," says her daughter, "but stern integrity was at the bottom of her character. She loved what was grand, noble, and enterprising, and was truly religious. . . . There was an enthusiasm about her that took hold of us, and made us see vividly the things that she taught us." With this mother Clough read Pope's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the lives of Leonidas, Epaminondas, and Columbus, and the history of the Protestant struggles in the Netherlands, shaping his early ideal of nobleness by such examples of heroic self-devotion to great causes. He was graver and more thoughtful than other boys, apt to use set phrases, and not a little pedantic in his views of life. At the age of ten he writes to tell his sister that the holidays are going to begin in these solemn words: "The summer vacation is now just approaching, after which time we shall be conducted, either by uncle Alfred or uncle Charles, to Rugby, which is not far from Leamington, at which place cousin Eliza is at school." His letter ends with this elaborate sentence: "Were you not grieved to hear that magnificent building, York Minster, had been partly destroyed through the destructive means of fire?"

Clough's family remained at Charleston, while he was sent to school at Rugby and his brother George to Chester. It was then that the most remarkable period in his life began, a period of promise and hope which were destined to much disappointment. It is worth while to dwell upon his letters written at that time from Rugby. They forcibly illustrate the power and nature of Dr. Arnold's influence, the high moral atmosphere which pervaded the school, and the almost unhealthy sense of responsibility and premature importance which was forced upon the older boys. Life between the age of ten and nineteen was already a most serious thing to some of Arnold's pupils. They worked at their own education and at the improvement of their little world as consciously and zealously as a London

clergyman among his flock, or a philosopher intent on the production of a new system, combining self-culture and missionary labours in one continued effort of elaborate earnestness. Clough was soon filled with the spirit of the place, which showed itself in a profound belief that Rugby was "the best of all public schools, which are the best kind of schools!" Nor was he content to enjoy the advantages of his position merely: he felt himself an integral part of the system, a member on whom in a great measure its welfare was dependent, and who was bound to sacrifice his own interests when needful to the common good. "I sometimes think," he writes, "of giving up fagging hard here, and doing all my extra work in the holidays, so as to have my time here free for these two objects:—1st, the improvement of the school; 2nd, the publication and telling abroad of the merits of the school by means of the Magazine." These ideas governed his whole school life. Much of his time was spent in conducting the *Rugby Magazine*, and in extending his personal influence by "associating with fellows for their good." The vigour of his language is not a little remarkable. "I verily believe my whole being is soaked through with the wishing and hoping and striving to do the school good, or rather to keep it up and hinder it from falling in this (I do think) very critical time, so that all my cares and affections and conversation, thoughts, words, and deeds look to that involuntarily." At another time he says,— "I don't know which to think the greatest, the blessing of being under Arnold, or the curse of being without a home." And again, "At school, where I am loved by many, and where I am living under, and gathering wisdom from, a great and good man, such a prospect makes me tremble, for it seems to be too fair for earth." At the same time he writes to his younger brother, impressing upon his softer mind the duties of practical religion, of steadiness of aim, and of constant striving against indolence. There was little indolence in Clough's life at that time. Indeed, though vigorous by constitution and athletic in his habits, his health seems to have been greatly broken by too assiduous study and premature anxiety.

Perhaps we may be inclined to think that there is something morbid in all this. Yet, allowing for the peculiar tone which Rugby under Arnold's influence acquired, we must admire this single-hearted interest in the welfare of a school, this enthusiasm for the character of a great teacher, this constant shaping of daily thoughts and actions to a high unselfish end. We cannot but feel that for a boy, as well as for a man, such a moral condition is good. We cannot but compare this spirit, if overstrained yet vigorous, with the selfishness, low aims, and lack of purity in many schools.

Unfortunately, it was excessive. Clough seems never to have recovered from the hotbed system of Rugby. His physical and mental health suffered in consequence of that precocious development. When he entered the larger world of Oxford, with principles adapted to the sphere which he had left, he seemed to have lost the plasticity of youth. Questions which might have proved a lighter burden to less conscious and formed characters, disturbed his peace; his old confidence was gone; and

by the time of his leaving college for the world of London, one might already have applied to him what was originally said of a greater poet, "Il était un jeune homme d'un bien beau passé."

One of the characteristics of the Rugbeians of that day was a profound belief in the institution to which they belonged. They seemed never to forget that when other youths were boys they had been men; that while others had picked up ideas and opinions here and there by chance, they had received the sharp and glittering coinage of Arnold's brain. This made them, as all the members of a new and pushing body must be, somewhat insufferable. They formed themselves into "a high Arnold set," and sought the improvement of their college by extending to its members the advantage of possessing Rugby friends. Clough began his life at Balliol in this strain. A flourish of trumpets had preceded his reception as senior scholar of the year 1836, and the most brilliant career was expected of him. But he soon submitted to the genius of the place. Instead of proselytizing he seemed likely to become a proselyte. The doctrines of J. H. Newman and the Tractarian party were then disturbing Oxford. Clough came under the influence of Ward, who was zealous in dialectics among the younger men, "asking you your opinions on every possible subject of this kind you can enumerate; beginning with Covent Garden and Macready, and certainly not ending till you got to the question of the moral sense and deontology." Nothing could be more different from the vigorous simplicity with which Arnold impressed upon his pupils his own definite conclusions on intellectual or moral questions. Clough's philosophy was deranged: multitudes of things about which he thought he had attained to certainty, became unsettled; and he did not live long enough to regain a clear insight. Perhaps this was inevitable; the bent of his mind seems to have inclined him to an almost morbid scrupulousness, and to speculation without end. He equally distrusted his own instincts and the opinions of the world, while the moral sensitiveness to which he was constitutionally inclined had been augmented rather than diminished by his school life. Other men are able after a time to dismiss the insoluble problems which must suggest themselves to every thinking mind, or at least to entertain them only as matters of inquiry independent of the real concerns of life. But Clough carried them about with him; they formed the foreground and the background to all his pictures of the world; they hung like a thick cloud over his spirit, and lay like obstacles upon the path which he desired to tread. Thus the great force of character which in times of more settled opinion would have rendered him distinguished as a man of action was neutralized; and the genius which might have been employed upon some solid work of art, was frittered away and obscured by doubts. His own thoughts corroded the intellect which gave them birth, and the best powers of his nature were left to prey upon themselves.

* It may be asked why we should dwell upon this spectacle of a baffled intellect? Nor would it be easy to answer this question were it not

for another side of Clough's character in which we see the real greatness of the man. Hampered as he always remained by the unsolved problems of the world, he was yet content to wait and trust though everything around him seemed confused and dark. Such daily work as came to him he did with all his might. Above all things he refused to acquiesce in make-believe religions and opinions of which he had discerned the hollowness. In the midst of doubt about the proper object of life, he never swerved from the conviction that there was a duty to be obeyed, a law of right and wrong which should not be transgressed. And though all kinds of moral and religious questions plagued his reason, he held fast to the belief that truth immutable abode behind the clouds, that God, the source of all good things, was cognizant of what we thought or did or said. The importance of such a faith as this will not be undervalued by any one who has observed the want of tone and moral helplessness to which mere scepticism leads; who has, for instance, compared the life of Clough with that of Alfred de Musset, a far greater artist, and a far less estimable man. "The New Sinai," "The Questioning Spirit," and the lines beginning "Whate'er when face to face we see," among Clough's poems, show the depth of these convictions in his soul. Such bitter pieces as "The Latest Decalogue," "There is no God the wicked saith," and "Easter Day," prove that his lack of definite beliefs did not spring from want of earnestness or thought, but that he had passed beyond the standing point of common orthodoxy without gaining ground sufficiently sure to base a new creed upon. "He would not make his reason blind," he could not solidify the prejudices of the mass, cry peace where there was no peace, or dishonestly acquiesce in certain formulas because the world at large expected it. The poem which begins "O thou whose image in the shrine of human spirits dwells divine," is a sufficiently clear expression of the earnest, if sad and undefined, faith which he carried with him to the grave. It is this profound reverence, this courage, this patience, this sincerity, this belief in the unseen, this loyalty to duty, which we admire in Clough, and which make the story of his life instructive. We need these qualities in the present day, when people are too ready on the one hand to hoot down speculation and to stifle doubt, while others take a pride in rushing prematurely to negative conclusions. The perplexities of Clough's mind so far hindered his activity that he was precluded from achieving all the academical honours that were expected of him. Before leaving Rugby the competition for prizes and distinctions had lost for him the charm of novelty. His success at Balliol sufficed to increase his reputation, but not to stimulate ambition. He took a second class in the final examinations, and after failing to obtain a fellowship in his own college, was elected fellow of Oriel in 1842. Among tutors and contemporaries his renown was great, far greater than his actual achievements warranted. Freshmen pointed out the grave and silent scholar, deep-voiced, broad-chested, with peculiar reverence, and one of the most distinguished professors of the university is still wont to say that no man he has known at Oxford bore

so clear a mark of genius as Clough. Personally, he became the object of devoted friendship. The mixture of power and tenderness, of thought and feeling, of upright honesty and diffidence, which marked his character, drew men towards him. He proved successful as a private "coach" and as a tutor in his college. But this fair state of things was not destined to last long. His position as the fellow and tutor of a great college brought him necessarily into close contact with many of the principles about which he had serious doubts. He was expected to teach and enforce what he could at most but half believe, and thus perpetually found himself in a false position. His own language illustrates the painfulness of this state: "If I begin to think about God," he writes, "there arise a thousand questions, and whether the Thirty-nine Articles answer them at all, or whether I should not answer them in the most diametrically opposite purport, is a matter of great doubt. If I am to study the question, I have no right to put my name to the answers beforehand, or to join in the acts of a body, and be to practical purposes one of a body, who accept these answers of which I propose to examine the validity."

Here is a sorry pass for an earnest and conscientious man who has signed the Thirty-nine Articles, and finds himself reputed by his colleagues and the world as one of their paid champions. Clough felt so hampered by his position at Oriel, that he decided, in 1848, to resign his tutorship: almost anything, he thought, was "honester than being a teacher of the Thirty-nine Articles." A few months later he resigned his fellowship and cut himself adrift from Oxford. By this step he gained some freedom, but he lost pecuniary advantages of no slight importance, congenial occupations, and the society of cultivated men. His father had recently failed in business, so that this sudden renunciation of a lucrative and certain post made his relations not a little anxious. "They wrote kindly and temperately on the whole," he says, "made the most of conscientiousness, but were alarmed with ideas of extreme and extravagant views." To Clough himself the breaking of his fetters brought a sense of infinite relief. He spent the Easter vacation of 1848 at Paris, among the stirring scenes of revolutions and counter-revolutions. His letters at that time took a curiously Carlylesque tone, and it is clear that from the various activities around him he caught a spark of genuine enthusiasm. His generous nature sympathized with every effort after freedom; and he almost won for himself the title of socialist, then dreaded with a superstitious terror, by the tirades which he delivered against "well-to-do-ism" and "aristocracies." This spirit prompted him to write at Oxford, in the spring of 1847, a pamphlet on the *Duty of Retrenchment during the Great Irish Famine*, in which he thus appeals to the students of the university:—"O ye, born to be rich, or, at least, born not to be poor; ye young men of Oxford, who gallop your horses over Bullingdon, and ventilate your fopperies arm-in-arm up the High Street, abuse, if you will, to the full that other plea of the spirits or thoughtlessness of youth, but let me advise you to hesitate ere you venture the question, May I not

do what I like with my own? ere you meddle with such edge tools as the subject of property." The poetical aspect of these sympathies, instead of the didactic or minatory, was set forth in his poem of *The Bothie*—a pleasant idyll of Oxford reading parties, written in the autumn of 1848. It is clear that a man of genius, so well provided with doubtful opinions on social, political, and religious questions, was not likely to keep quiet and at ease in the henroost of Oxford, where heterodoxies even of the retrograde and Romanizing order were regarded with great horror.

In the beginning of 1849, Clough accepted the headship of University Hall, London. This institution was but just founded, and before it came into working order he had time to visit Rome, and be a witness of the extinction of Mazzini's republic. His letters from Rome are full of vigorous thought and graphic touches. It was during his detention in the beleaguered city that he wrote the *Amours de Voyage*, which, perhaps, may be regarded as his most finished poem. The autumn found him established in Gordon Square, at the head of his hall, alone, and comparatively free. He had hoped for perfect liberty of thought and action; but this he could not find. In fact the whole of his life was destined to prove one perpetual hustling against orthodoxies—at Oxford against the orthodoxy of the English Church—in London against the orthodoxy of heterodoxical opinions—in America against the orthodoxy of established Unitarians. The social problems which life in London forces upon a solitary man plagued him. He could not fix himself to money-making as the object of existence, and was always restless as to the utility of his own occupations. To one of his friends he writes, "I, like you, have jumped over a ditch for the fun of the experiment, and would not be disinclined to be once more again in a highway, with my brethren and companions. But *Spartam nactus es, hanc orna*. . . . Nothing is very good anywhere, I am afraid." Later on he said in the same strain, "I feel sometimes as if I must not trifle away time in anything which is not really a work to some purpose, and that any attempt to be happy, except in doing that, would be a mere failure, were it apparently successful. It sometimes seems to be said to me that I must do this, or else 'from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.' There is nothing very terrible in this, but I cannot get myself to look at things as mere means to money-making; and yet if I do not, I seem in some sense guilty." The dramatic poem *Dipsychus*, written in 1850, shows how profoundly his whole mental constitution was divided and distracted by the sense of unaccomplishment and misdirected energies. Some of its lines are pointed to himself—

Heartily you will not take to anything;
 Whatever happen, don't I see you still
 Living no life at all?
 Methinks I see you
 Through everlasting limboes of void time,
 Twirling and twiddling ineffectively,
 And indeterminately swaying for ever.

In fact Clough was one of those men who long for work, whose consciences oppress them if they rest a moment idle, but who cannot set their hands to anything which seems to them worth doing. They are too acutely critical to put their faith in the systems that satisfy other men, too scrupulous to let the question go unsolved, and use their energy in the pursuit of selfish aims. A church is the proper sphere for these men; that alone consecrates daily labour to spiritual ends, and relieves the zealous worker of importunate responsibility. But the time has long gone by since any church could satisfy the mind of such a man as Clough. His painful sensibility to all the puzzles of the world incapacitated him for useful labour even when he most desired it.

Yet we must not fall into a one-sided view of Clough's character. He was not a sour misanthropist or gloomy dreamer. Much humour and interest in many subjects are shown in all his letters, and the creeds which supported his life were of a high and noble kind. Of religion he speaks thus,—“My own feeling does not go along with Coleridge in attributing any special virtue to the facts of the Gospel History. They have happened, and have produced what we know have transformed the civilization of Greece and Rome and the barbarism of Gaul and Germany into Christendom. But I cannot feel sure that a man may not have all that is important in Christianity even if he does not so much as know that Jesus of Nazareth existed. And I do not think that doubts respecting the facts related in the Gospels need give us much trouble. Believing that in one way or other the thing is of God, we shall in the end know, perhaps, in what way, and how far it was so. Trust in God's justice and love, and belief in his commands as written in our conscience, stand unshaken, though Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, or even St. Paul were to fail.

“The thing which men must work at will not be critical questions about the Scriptures, but philosophical problems of grace, and free will, and of redemption as an idea, not as an historical event. What is the meaning of ‘Atonement by a Crucified Saviour?’ How many of the Evangelicals can answer that?”

And of his theory of life we hear,—“As for the objects of life, heaven knows! they differ with one's opportunities. (a.) Work for others—political, mechanical, or as it may be. (b.) Personal relations. (c.) Making books, pictures, music, etc. (d.) Living in one's shell. ‘They also serve who only stand and wait.’” There is nothing fanciful or trivial or selfish in either of these creeds. Insufficient as they may be to happiness, far as they may be from supplying a man less powerful than Clough with energy to battle in the world, they reveal to us the patience of a calm and philosophic mind. “If we die and come to nothing,” he remarks, “it does not therefore follow that life and goodness will cease to be in heaven and earth.” In this negative stoicism of a man defrauded of positive creeds and unwilling to relapse into selfish indifference there is something which moves admiration even more than pity in the midst of sadness.

University Hall having proved a failure as far as Clough was concerned, he set out in 1852 to try his fortunes in the New World. What it cost him to leave England may easily be guessed and is pathetically expressed in the following stanzas of a poem written on the voyage :—

Come back ; come back ; and whither back or why ?
To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes to try ;
Walk the old fields ; pace the familiar street ;
Dream with the idlers, with the bards compete.
Come back, come back.

Come back ; come back ; and whither and for what ?
To finger idly some old Gordian knot,
Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to cleave,
And with much toil attain to half believe.
Come back, come back.

Come back ; come back ; yea, back indeed do go
Sighs panting thick, and tears that want to flow ;
Fond fluttering hopes upraise their useless wings,
And wishes idly struggle in the strings.
Come back, come back.

There was even pain in relinquishing his old perplexities, or rather in carrying them away with him to new and less congenial scenes. Yet even Clough had reasons in the history of his own family, in his political sympathies, and in the friendship which he had formed for Emerson, to feel less doubtful about the advantages of expatriation than many were who seek their fortunes in the colonies. He travelled with Thackeray, and soon found himself in the society of Longfellow, Hawthorne, Channing, Theodore Parker, Dana, Lowell, and others. The *Bothie*, which suited American tastes, had gained for him a poet's reputation ; and his sound scholarship secured him the certainty of work. After settling at Cambridge with the intention of making "pupillizing and writing" his vocation, he was forthwith engaged in teaching Greek to an American youth of seventeen years of age, and six feet one in height, and in preparing for the press a revised edition of Dryden's *Plutarch*. But he found it languid work. The novelty of American life wore off ; the tyranny of fixed opinions made itself felt even in the United States, and Clough was glad enough to hear of a place in the Privy Council Office having been procured for him by friends. He returned to England in 1853, from which time, till his death in 1861, he led a uniform, hardworking, uneventful life. In 1854 he married, and subsequently had two children, to whom he was most devotedly attached. The nature of his employment was on the whole satisfactory. "I am going on here, working in the office in the ordinary routine, which, however, after years of great tuition, is really a very great relief. All education is in England, and I think in America, so mixed up with religious matters, that it is a great difficulty." Another time he says, in something of his old spirit, "Well, I go on in the office—*operosè nihil agendo*—very operose, and very nihil, too." At the same time the society of eminent men, Carlyle and Tennyson and others, whose

friendship he formed during the latter period of his life, the pretty regular correspondence which he kept up with his American acquaintances, his lively interest in home and foreign politics, and the reading of current literature, supplied his life with numerous and pleasant sources of occupation. His work was unintermitting in its energy. The condition of the educational department of the Privy Council Office at the time when his assistance was required, enabled him to exercise those administrative powers which he possessed so largely, and which had been so long dormant. He infused new life into the system. Nor was he content with his official labours, but continued to devote his spare time to conducting for Miss Nightingale the business connected with her Crimean expedition. Two years before his death his health began to waver. He visited Greece and Constantinople in the April of 1861, and in the summer of that year travelled in the Pyrenees. During these journeys he was alone; but in that summer Mrs. Clough joined him. They went together across the Alps to Florence, where his health gave way entirely beneath the attack of a malarious fever. He died on the 13th of November, in his forty-third year, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery just outside the Porta à Pinti. He lies not far from the graves of Walter Savage Landor, of Mrs. Barrett Browning, and of Theodore Parker, upon the slope beneath the cypress trees within view of "quiet pleasant Fiesole," a spot second only in beauty and interest to Shelley's grave beneath the walls of Rome.

We cannot do better than echo the words of one of his biographers, who says, "This truly was a life of much performance, yet of more promise." During his two and forty years Clough did more than might have been expected from an average man; and none could have cavilled at the results of his life had it not been palpable from first to last that Clough was far above the ordinary height of men. This to those who knew him, was stamped on his face and form, on his actions, and on his expressed opinions, and we who only judge of him by poems and remains, may find it legible upon his written words.

After writing many pieces in the *Rugby Magazine*, Clough began his career as a poet at Oxford by the publication of a little volume of fugitive pieces called *Ambarvalia*. He and his friend Burbidge brought it out conjointly in 1848. Shortly after this he wrote and printed *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*; at Rome, in 1849, he composed the *Amours de Voyage*, which were, however, not given to the world till 1858. In the following year he wrote *Dipsychus* and *Easter Day*, the former at Venice, the latter at Naples. Thus all his principal poems were written before 1851, and all were localized,—Scotland, Rome, Venice, and Naples supplying the scenery of his four chief works. After 1850, his genius seemed to have fallen asleep, and it was not until the year of his death that it reappeared again in a wholly different kind of composition. *Mari Magno, or Tales on Board*, consists of three stories supposed to have been told on successive nights by fellow-travellers in an American steamer. They are written in the style of Crabbe, with some affectation of Crabbe's

prosaic plainness, but more of delicacy than the poet of the borough ever showed. These tales have been regarded by some critics as a falling-off from Clough's earlier productions, and an indication of failing strength : others will see in them the resurrection of a true poetic genius in a new and healthier direction. As regards expression, concentration, and vigour of description, *The Clergyman's Tale* is superior to any of Clough's other works. We do not trace in it the painful intensity of *Easter Day*, but the subject is one that enlists the broadest human sympathies, and does not appeal merely to a passing phase in some distempered souls. *Mari Magno* might, in our opinion, be compared to the fresh growth of young and vigorous shoots, which a tree puts forth when it has been relieved of withered or decaying branches. The speculations out of which *Dipsychus*, *Easter Day*, and *Amours de Voyage* were woven, interrupted the healthy development of Clough's genius. It was only when he absolutely abandoned them, and directed his poetic powers to subjects outside himself, and capable of true artistic treatment, that he won a place among the poets of the world. Death put a stop to the further expansion of a mind which showed so fair a promise of nobler and more enduring fruit. Fixing our attention upon the poems which survive, we notice that Clough's principal defect lay in the power of expression. He did not use language with any facility, so that his words barely and unattractively clothe thoughts of great fertility and beauty. Even in his correspondence this is apparent. A certain meagreness and awkwardness of speech seems habitual to his style. In spite of this defect, however, which ought to have resulted in extreme concentration, he was frequently diffuse. It sometimes seemed as if he had a thought he could not seize, and wandered around it in a haze of barren words. Pages of *Dipsychus* will illustrate this criticism ; they are tedious from their length and ambiguity, and want of ornament. On the other hand, whenever Clough felt intensely, and grasped a simple thought with mastery, his words are few, and fall like hammer-strokes. Nothing can be more impressive in its naked force than this passage from *Easter Day* :—

What if the women, ere the dawn was grey,
Saw one or more great angels, as they say,
(Angels, or Him himself) ? Yet neither there, nor then,
Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at all,
Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten ;
Nor, save in thunderous terror, to blind Saul ;
Save in an after-Gospel and late Creed,
He is not risen, indeed,—
Christ is not risen !

Some words need to be said in explanation of these lines. *Easter Day* is to Clough's other poems what *The Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* is to Wordsworth's volumes. It expresses with admirable concentration the despair which he felt when he compared the promises of Christianity with the guilt and misery of men ; the bitterness that filled his soul when he reflected on the disappointment of long-cherished hopes, the death of

ancient creeds, and the necessity of walking, unenlightened from above, in a dark, wicked world. It is a cry of want and pain wrung from the soul of one to whom belief is vital, but whom reason and reflection force to leave the trodden pathways of religious faith. Its tone of defiant bitterness is very characteristic of Clough. He was not wont, like Alfred de Musset, to pour out his anguish in eloquent apostrophes to the crucifix of happier and humbler creeds; he did not indulge in pathetic reminiscences; but he fixed his mind upon the realities of present experience, whether hard or soothing. By the side of despair, such as this,—

Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls bereaved :
 Of all the creatures under heaven's wide cope
 We are most hopeless, who had once most hope,
 And most beliefless, that had most believed.
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
 As of the unjust, also of the just,—
 Yea, of that Just One too !
 It is the one sad Gospel that is true—
 Christ is not risen !

he could set these milder meditations :—

Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,
 Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly look around.
 Whate'er befell,
 Earth is not hell ;
 Now too, as when it first began,
 Life is yet life, and man is man.
 For all that breathe beneath the heaven's high cope,
 Joy with grief mixes, with despondence hope.
 Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief ;
 Or at the least, faith unbelief.
 Though dead, not dead ;
 Not gone, though fled ;
 Not lost, though vanished.
 In the great gospel and true creed,
 He is yet risen indeed ;
 Christ is yet risen.

If we seek to affiliate Clough to his legitimate predecessors in English literature, we shall find that he descends lineally from Wordsworth. The two poets were alike strong in their friendships, genial in their daily life, yet bitter and unsparing of their scorn where vice or folly called for hatred and contempt. They both belonged to that breed of plain livers and high thinkers, lovers and observers of nature in all her moods, philosophical thinkers and liberal politicians, who form the flower of English literary men. How deeply Clough sympathized with the beauties of nature may be seen in his poem of the *Bothie*. It is written in loose hexameters not very different in their jingling measure from a kind of prose. This undress suited Clough's style, and enabled him to express himself with force and freedom. The poem is an Oxford idyll, showing how men live together, walk and talk and dance and fall in love when they assemble in a summer long vacation among highland lakes. The simple love story which relieves

this narrative is very well told. *Amours de Voyage* pretends to more of artistic completeness ; it consists of letters from Rome, Florence, and elsewhere, written to their several friends by an English girl and a self-analytical Englishman, who fall in love with each other. Accidents of travelling separate them, and we never know the end of their story. The elegiacs of this poem faintly recall Goethe's Roman elegies : the hexameters are like those of the *Bothie*. *Dipsychus*, as its name implies, is the story of a man with a double soul—or rather with two voices in his soul ; one impelling him to seek the world and action and indulge his instincts, the other leading him aside to meditation and the purity of a secluded life. It is the old contest between flesh and spirit, real and ideal, action and dreaming, the world as it is and as it might be, viewed through the peculiar medium of Clough's perturbations at the time when he composed it. How much it owes to Faust in conception and execution we need not inquire. It is a curious example of the powerlessness to take any course, the wire-drawn subtlety, the high moral tone, and the mixed motives of modern scepticism. One or two passages in this poem reveal a greater fluency of language than is common with Clough. We will conclude our notice by extracting one of these :—

O happy hours !

O compensation ample for long days
Of what impatient tongues call wretchedness !
O beautiful beneath the magic moon
To walk the watery way of palaces !
O beautiful, o'ervaulted with gemmed blue,
This spacious court, with colour and with gold,
With cupolas and pinnacles, and points,
And crosses multiplex, and tips and balls
Wherewith the bright stars unrepining mix,
(Nor scorn by hasty eyes to be confused) ;
Fantastically perfect this low pile
Of Oriental glory ; these long ranges
Of classic chiselling, this gay flickering crowd,
And the calm campanile. Beautiful !
O beautiful ! and that seemed more profound,
This morning by the pillar when I sat
Under the great arcade at the review,
And took, and held, and ordered on my brain
The faces and the voices, and the whole mass
O' the motley facts of existence flowing by !
O perfect if 'twere all ! But it is not ;
Hints haunt me ever of a more beyond ;
I am rebuked by a sense of the incomplete,
Of a completion over soon assumed,
Of adding up too soon. What we call sin,
I could believe a painful opening out
Of paths for ampler virtue. The bare field
Scant with lean ears of harvest, long had mocked
The vexed laborious farmer ; came at length
The deep plough in the lazy under-soil
Down-driving ; with a cry Earth's fibres crack,
And a few months, and lo ! the golden leas,
And Autumn's crowded shocks and loaded wains.

The Peace-Conflicts of India.

"ANY news from India?"

"Only another row."

"What about? A woman in the case?"

"Not this time: something about oilman's stores and mutton."

Such, with incidental variations, is too often the style of conversation heard after the arrival of an Indian mail. The great sensation of the month is some new "scandal." The Indian journals indeed are seldom without an excitement of an intensely personal character. Somebody's reputation is being tried in the balance. As soon as the country ceases to be convulsed with war, the conflicts of peace commence. A drowsy cantonment, or a bustling hill station, may be the scene of strife. The contention may be purely among the men; or a woman, if not the *causa tetrica belli*, may be mixed up with it, and "more embroil the affray." In some cases, perhaps, there may be grave infractions of the moral law; but in others the story is encrusted with the pettiest personalities, which, however exciting they may be on the spot, are regarded at a distance simply with contempt; and the pity of it is, that often great and honourable names are associated with these small and discreditable "scandals." The general inference then is, that there is something in an Indian sun that "breeds maggots," not only in "dead dogs," but also in "live lions." A distinguished general, who is supposed to know as much at least of the theory of war as any man in the British army, and who is said to be equally sagacious in council, is suddenly paraded before the public in connection with an unseemly dispute with one of his aides-de-camp. It would be foreign to our purpose to enter into the merits of the last "scandal," even if the fact that it was, at the date of our last advices from India, still under investigation by a judicial tribunal, did not forbid any pre-judgment of the case. Nor shall we analyse any of its predecessors. But the natural history of these "scandals" is not unworthy of examination. We hear much about the "demoralizing effects of the Indian climate." It is said that these things would not have happened anywhere else. Is it so? We will endeavour to show how far the conditions of Anglo-Indian society contribute to the growth of the evil.

We are unwilling to accept those sweeping statements so often made to the effect that Anglo-Indian morality is on a very low scale in comparison with that which is maintained among Englishmen at home. There are, doubtless, some special circumstances which must be admitted to have a deteriorating effect upon society in India—circumstances of which we

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shall presently speak in detail—but there are others the tendency of which is towards the maintenance of sound morality. Foremost among these is the fact that there can be no secrecy; nothing can be done in the darkness. The Englishman in India is a marked man. He is never lost in a crowd. All his habits and ways of life are well known. He cannot go hither and thither without being watched. Privacy is impossible to him. Literally and figuratively, he lives with his doors and windows open towards every point of the compass. His countrymen are able to take his exact measure. He cannot lead a disreputable life and bear a respectable character. There is no such thing as “keeping up appearances.” In England you may live next door to a man, or even lodge in the same house with him, and yet take no account of his name, much less of his doings. In our large towns, we are mostly too busy to concern ourselves about the affairs of our neighbours; the multitude of those neighbours is distracting; and individual recognitions, except on a very limited scale, are impossible. Mr. Brown in Belgravia may be “Mr. Jones” in St. John’s Wood; yet no account may be taken of his duality. Nay, even noble lords may slip their peerages in the “shady groves of the Evangelist,” and bring no scandal upon their names. But in India, our countrymen for the most part live in a state of society resembling that which exists, not in a large town, but in a small village at home. And in our small villages scandals abound, although they seldom obtain more than a limited local notoriety. Even in the case of such residence, in the midst of small rural societies, men prone to irregularity of life may “run up to London on business,” and commit manifold transgressions without any one of their neighbours, or even the members of their own household, knowing anything about it. But in India a man can do nothing “on the sly.” Even the place where he dines is matter of notoriety. He lives, as it were, in a glass-house, surrounded by servants, who follow him everywhere. Moreover, he is generally tied down to a particular locality by official or other engagements. He cannot play the truant if he would.

There are better—by which we mean more honourable—reasons than this “hazard of concealment” for not “tempting the illicit rove.” We are disposed to think that the sanctity of domestic life is less frequently violated in India than in England, chiefly because husband and wife are “thrown upon each other” more, are more mutually dependent, in the former country than in the latter. This sense of reciprocal reliance, doubtless, rivets the chains of conjugal love and fidelity. Neither men nor women have the same external resources, the same means of obtaining excitement and variety abroad, as in European countries; and, therefore, they are the more ready to reconcile themselves to the dulness and monotony of home, to take interest in small things, and to cultivate the domestic charities. There is, indeed, no state of society in the world in which the blessing of a good wife is more thoroughly appreciated than it is among Englishmen in India.

But it must be admitted, on the other hand, that there are some

adverse circumstances which may tend in some measure to counterbalance these advantages. It is true that women marry very young in India, and that marriages are formed after very short acquaintance and with very slight mutual knowledge of character. A morning call or two, a little conversation at the band, a dinner-party, a ball, and the thing is done. It is said, too, that what is irreverently called the "marriage market" in India is not supplied with produce of the best kind; that at an early age girls are deprived of parental care, are imperfectly educated in England, under the supervision of strangers, and return, whilst yet in their teens, to the care of parents in India of whom they know little or nothing. But this evil has been in recent years very much modified by the extension of steam communication and by the more liberal character of the furlough regulations. In old times, a child was often sent to England, and ten or twelve years afterwards returned a grown woman to a father and a mother whom during all that time she had never seen. But, in these days, it rarely happens that a separation of this kind endures during many years. The separation is of another kind,—the separation of husband and wife. And this is another of the deteriorating circumstances to which we have referred. The domestic "scandals," of which, unhappily, we have too many instances on the records of the divorce court, are mostly the growth of these enforced separations. The wife goes home to see her children or to recruit her health; and either on the voyage to England or during her residence there may be exposed to grievous temptation. This, doubtless, is a peculiarity of Indian life, though the mischief occurs out of India. There is something, however, of the same kind in the country itself. "Scandals" do arise, at the hill stations, where women temporarily separated from their husbands—"grass widows"—enjoy themselves in the invigorating mountain air whilst their husbands are toiling on the plains. They are exposed to the flatteries and seductions of idle men, who have nothing to do but to make themselves agreeable to others and to amuse themselves. It would be strange if there were not some shipwrecks of domestic happiness. But domestic happiness is wrecked at times in all parts of the civilized world. We do not claim for Anglo-Indian society any immunity from those stains and blots which deface social life in Europe; but we are disposed to think that, as a whole, the morality of our countrymen in the East is substantially on a higher scale than in other parts of the world, where men are less easily found out.

Why then do we hear so much of these Indian scandals? The question almost answers itself. *De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*. In England a vast deal exists that does not appear. In India everything that exists in the lives of English residents does appear, and with an ostentatious appearance. We hear of more "scandals" in India in proportion to the extent of European society, but it does not follow, therefore, that more scandalous things are done. The magnitude of the evil consists mainly in our hearing of it. That which excites much interest in India, would excite little or none in England. Petty personal matters

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loom large in a country where, in times of peace, there are no great questions to dwarf them. An Indian newspaper, day after day, or week after week, devotes whole pages to a Mhow scandal or a Simlah scandal; and its readers find the record of these personal conflicts very entertaining matter. In dull times such incidents as these are god-sends to hungry journalists. It is very much the same all over the journalising world. During the past month our own papers have been dealing largely in "scandals," which at a busier season of the year would necessarily have been overlaid by more important intelligence. To the question, "Why do we hear so much of these election scandals?" we might answer, "Because we hear of them." Whether it be a matter of buying votes or selling mutton, it is all the same. We should have heard little or nothing of all these minute details of bribery and corruption, if the committees of investigation and the two Houses of Parliament had been sitting at the same time. But in the long vacation we are glad of such little excitements. They are to us very much what the scandals of which we are writing are to the Anglo-Indian community in times of peace. Election scandals are large matters in proportion to those which obtain such painful prominence in India; but so is the community that takes account of them a large community in proportion to that which gloats over the personal contentions of Simlah or Mhow. Except in times of war or revolution, no great questions rise up in India to interest the great mass of the Anglo-Indian community. Of course there are great questions—perhaps, the greatest in the world—continually pressing forward for solution; but though they are deeply interesting to a few thinking minds, to the majority of our countrymen in India they are essentially dull. Who doubts that nine out of ten readers of an Indian newspaper, seeing in contiguous columns "The Simlah Scandal" and the "Famine in Orissa," incontinently address themselves first to all the details of the former?

It comes to this, that the conditions of Anglo-Indian society render it necessary that the petty personal conflicts, from whatever source they may arise, which for convenience we designate by the generic name of "scandals," should obtain extraordinary prominence in India. It may be an affair of love or an affair of money; but when it may be fairly surmised that a very large majority of the readers of a newspaper know something about the parties concerned in the case, it is, of course, published with minuteness of detail. In England not a thousandth—perhaps not a ten thousandth part of the readers of a newspaper know or care anything about any particular "case" reported in its columns. Half-a-dozen divorce suits are disposed of by the judge ordinary in the course of a day, and the whole are reported, except on very special occasions, in half-a-column of our daily papers; and, perhaps, among them is an "Indian case," which would have afforded column after column of sensation matter to an Indian journal, if it had been investigated in one of the presidential high courts. We have, at times, too, our military "scandals," in regiments stationed at home; but, except in rare

instances, as for example that of the famous "black bottle" affair, the interest which they excite is very limited, and, therefore, the space devoted to them in our journals is the same. Now, all this is very intelligible; but when due allowance is made for it, is it sufficient to account wholly for the apparent frequency of these Indian "scandals;" or are there other conditions of Anglo-Indian society affecting not merely the apparent, but also the existent? We cannot answer this question altogether in the negative. We believe that the comparative frequency of these Indian scandals has been very much exaggerated, because they have been obtruded more prominently upon public notice; but we do not deny that the comparison is, to some extent, to the disadvantage of India. There are circumstances, doubtless, which favour the growth of the evil in that country. It remains then for us to consider what they are.

The "scandals" of which we write are mostly military "scandals," and they are developed in time of peace. When India is convulsed with war, foreign or domestic, we seldom hear anything of these things, and it may be presumed that they do not exist. When men have a common enemy to face, they are little minded to quarrel among themselves. They have too much to do and too much to think of, to vex themselves or others about trifles. Moreover, a feeling of comradeship is engendered by the sense of a common danger, and the quest of a common object; petty animosities and irritations subside under the excitement of strenuous action; men are knit to each other in bonds of brotherhood at such a time, and know none but honourable rivalries. But in the dreary stagnation of cantonment-life in India, our officers have too much time upon their hands. If idleness be not the mother of all the vices, she is assuredly the mother of strife. But it may be said that there is plenty of idleness in our English garrison towns. Doubtless, and our English garrison towns are sometimes hotbeds of scandal. But there are many circumstances which mitigate the evils of the *far-niente* in England. The climate of India during a great part of the year compels inaction. Military life, in time of peace, at home may not be burdened with very heavy duties; but there is much more social occupation than in the East. Existence may not be very profitable; but it is not a dreary blank. The curse of *ennui* does not sit upon our officers in such places as Maidstone and Canterbury, Dublin and Brighton. One station may be more or less lively than another; but on the whole there is no lack of amusement. Idle men of good address are always in requisition in our provincial towns. There are pic-nics and croquet parties, and cricket-matches in the summer; shooting and hunting and steeple-chasing in the autumn and winter; and balls and dinner-parties at all seasons. In such circumstances officers diffuse themselves more than they can at an Indian station, where the society is so much more limited. What is the effect of a handful of people being, as it were, shut up together, with no possibility of escape, is especially observable in life on board-ship. In the old times—not so very long ago

after all—when the voyage to and from India occupied four or five months, it was seldom accomplished without a “scandal.” People became very intimate and familiar with each other; and it often happened that the closest friends at the beginning of a voyage were the bitterest enemies at the end. If there were no quarrels before the ship entered the Hooghly or the Channel, it was a blessing for which the passengers had good cause devoutly to be thankful. Now, the society of a military cantonment in India very much resembles that of a large passenger vessel. People become very intimate and familiar with each other, and out of this intimacy and familiarity come contempt and strife. In the absence of all larger objects and interests, little things become great. Petty grievances and causes of offence are exaggerated. The apple of contention grows in time to the size of an immense gourd. It is watered and nourished on either side by the partisanship of lookers-on, who, in the general dearth of excitement, find a stimulating occupation in watching the affray.

We do not mean to say that military society in India is necessarily distinguished by the frequency of its scandals and contentions. We have known large stations, the residents of which have dwelt together for years in the utmost harmony; where the married families lived in affectionate intercourse with each other, and their houses were continually open to the younger officers of the cantonment. But as the stations which we have in mind were chiefly in the vicinity of the great presidency towns, the fact of which we speak rather strengthens than impairs our argument. In the vicinity of the presidency an officer has a larger circle of friends and acquaintances, and a greater diversity of objects of interest. Everything is on a larger scale. He does not see eternally the same faces, or from week's end to week's end hear the same style of conversation. But in an “up-country” station, if a man is bored, there is no escape; if he is *ennuyé*, there is no relief. An absorbing occupation is an antidote against the poison of petty provocations. But there is seldom any such safeguard in the accompaniments of military life in a Mofussil station. We all know what are the jealousies and animosities—the rivalries and malignities—the scandals and backbitings—the “evil tongues and rash judgments”—which often make society in remote rural districts as unlovely and uncharitable as the spots on which they dwell are lovely and benign. But in the metropolis people have little time to quarrel, and they are case-hardened against small aggravations. The attrition of the world soon rubs off the mark left by paltry annoyances. But in small communities and in remote places these annoyances stick to men like burrs, because they have seldom sufficient occupation to wear them off. So it is in our more remote Indian military stations. Idleness begets and nourishes strife.

Another illustration of this may be discerned in the fact that we seldom hear anything of these “scandals” among the members of the Indian Civil Service, who for the most part are occupied from morning to night in the performance of important duties. Take such a picture as

this—and it is not an exaggerated one—of the daily life of a revenue officer in India:—

We see him exerting daily, and with no vain or fruitless result, all his faculties of observation, of research, of penetration, of judgment. It is a strange sight—a wonderful proof of the power of intellectual and moral education—to watch the respect and confidence evinced by grey-headed men towards that beardless youth. We see him, in the early morning mist, stretching at an inspiring gallop over the dewy fields. Not unmindful is he of the hare, which scuds away from his horse's feet; of the call of the partridge from the brake; or of the wild fowl on the marsh. The well-earned holiday will arrive, when he will be able to follow these, or perhaps nobler game; but at present he has other work on hand. He is on his way to some distant point, where measurements are to be tested, doubts resolved, or objections investigated. This done, he returns to his solitary breakfast, cheered by the companionship of a book, or perhaps by letters from a far-distant land—doubly welcome under such circumstances. The forenoon is spent in receiving reports from the native officers employed under him; in directing their operations; in examining, comparing, analysing, and arranging the various information which comes in from all quarters. As the day advances, the wide-spread shade begins to be peopled with living figures. Group after group of villagers arrive in their best and whitest dresses; and a hum of voices succeeds to the stillness, before only broken by the cooing of the dove, and the scream of the parrot. The carpet is then spread in the open air; the chair is set; litigants and spectators take their seats on the ground in orderly ranks; silence is proclaimed, and the rural court is opened. As case after case is brought forward, the very demeanour of the parties, and of the crowds around, seems to point out on which side justice lies. No need here of *ex parte* decisions, or claims lost through default. All are free to come and go, with little trouble, and at no expense. No need of lengthened pleadings. A few simple questions bring out the matter of the suit, and the grounds on which it rests. No need of lists of witnesses. Scores of witnesses are ready on the spot, alike unsummoned and untutored. No need of the Koran, or Ganges water. The love of truth is strong, even in an Indian breast, when preserved from counteracting influences; still more so, then, when the sanction of public opinion assists and protects the rightful cause. In such a court Abraham sat, when arbitrating among his simple-minded herdsmen. In such a court was justice everywhere administered in the childhood of the human race; before wealth increased, and with wealth complicated interests, and law became a science requiring a life's study to understand. Strange must that man's character be, and dull his sympathies, who, in the midst of occupations like these, does not find his heart accompanying and lightening his labours.

This is a sketch of civil work written by a distinguished civilian,* and the truth of it has been amply confirmed by other writers of the same profession. In Mr. Charles Raikes's entertaining and instructive volume entitled *Notes on the North-Western Provinces*, and in Mr. Edwards's more recently published work, *Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian*, we see distinctly the character of civil work in India—how varied and important, and, above all, how deeply interesting it is. As the extract which we have given represents this work on the revenue side, so Mr. Raikes's book chiefly treats of the judicial, and Mr. Edwards's of its political aspects.

Men who spend their lives in this way are not likely to be mixed up with petty "scandals." But very different is the existence of a military officer at an up-country station. During the greater part of the year, the heat of the climate forbids regimental exercises of any kind except in the

* Originally published in the *Calcutta Review*.

morning and the evening, and even in the cold weather they occupy only a few hours of the day. There is a book-club and a band and a billiard-table (perhaps not all of these), and little or nothing beyond to occupy and amuse the mind. There is good soil, therefore, for the growth of strife. The beginning may be very small; but it grows apace, and soon assumes portentous dimensions. And the worst of it is that in this view of the case, looking upon idleness as the root of the evil, there is every prospect of an increasing number of these scandals. The recent changes in the organization of the Indian Army have necessarily had a great effect upon military society. The Indian officer, "pure and simple," looking upon India as his home, taking a deep interest in the country and its people, studying the native languages so as to prepare himself for useful and honourable work, proud of his profession and content with his way of life, is now giving place to the "general service" officer, the bird of passage, who looks upon his residence in India as a period of hated exile, and only cares to kill the time until the happy hour of his release from the bondage which his soul abhors. With sixty or seventy thousands of European soldiers in India, the country must be over-run with officers of this class—honourable gentlemen and good military leaders—but with tastes and dispositions utterly untuned to the environments of Indian life. Exceptions may, doubtless, be found. Among the many there may be some who, looking seriously at their position, begin to discern attainable objects not unworthy of their best endeavours, and gradually open their eyes to the fact that an Indian career may not be so bad a thing after all. But that a very large majority will always be found, who can by no means reconcile themselves to Indian life, is unfortunately not to be doubted. A hatred of India is natural to this class of officers. They have not enlisted for Indian service, and they look upon the necessity of taking their turn of duty in so abominable a country as the one great drawback from the advantages of their general position as officers of her Majesty's army.

And we are afraid that this is not all. There are many of the old race of Company's officers, who, having gone out flushed with pleasurable anticipations of an Indian career, have been deprived of all heart and hope by the changes incident upon the transfer of the Indian Government to the Crown, and have settled down into a state of discontent from which it is scarcely probable that they will ever emerge. Every one now says that "India is not what it was. The Indian service is not what it was." There is a general hatred of India, of which those who left the country some twelve or fifteen years ago can form no adequate conception. There are few who are not eager to quit it, but who do not feel, at the same time, that from the loss of prospects they have sustained, it is more difficult to quit it than ever. These "Indian Army grievances" of which we have heard so much,—words which, perhaps, to the general public convey only a very vague idea,—have grievously affected that general efficiency which has its source in loyalty and content. We trust that the more liberal

view, which has been taken by the present Government, of the equitable claims of the aggrieved officers, may have some effect in allaying the very natural and excusable irritation which for some years has disturbed the minds of the officers of the old Company's army ; but we are afraid that those miserable words, " too late," are inscribed upon these acts of tardy justice. " The beautiful has vanished, and returns not."

Nothing can bring back the hour
Of glory to the grass—of splendour to the flower—

And nothing can bring back the confidence and affection which has once been banished by acts of grievous injustice and wrong-doing.

But even apart from this, if the old Indian Army had been left in its normal state, still society would have been subjected to a baneful change by the influences of the Great Rebellion of 1857-58. This great historical event has doubtless shaken to its very foundation the security which Anglo-Indian residents once felt, and has engendered a bitter feud between the two races which years of peace will not be potent to allay. The atrocities which were committed during this season of convulsion has forced those who before loved, to hate India and her people. Time may mitigate this evil ; but until it has brought " healing on its wings " the wounds will be open wounds, and our people will writhe and gnash their teeth under the infliction of these running sores. Whilst this feeling exists, even our old Indian officers cannot take the interest which they once took in their work. There is, naturally, an increased tendency to send the family to England ; and so there is more and more weariness, and *insouciance*, and indolence, amongst those who were once interested and active, and who seldom or never hankered after home.

Assuming, then, that it is want of interest in the environments of Indian life, and general indolence and discontent, which, more than all else, are the provocatives of the " scandals " which have lately obtained such unfortunate notoriety in India,* it is easy to perceive that there is one remedy, or none. If a man has work to do, and takes interest in doing it, we may be sure that he will not much concern himself about those paltry personalities which fructify into " scandals." Much has been written lately about the character of the European soldier (especially in India), and of the efforts made to improve it, but as the officer is so will

* It will be seen that this is not written with any special reference to the last scandal of " Mansfield and Jervis," which must be regarded as something of an exceptional character. Still we are right in saying that even this is one of those " peace-conflicts " which would have been impossible in time of war. A lively and sagacious weekly paper—the *Examiner*—says that this " scandal " arises from the fact that aides-de-camp are after all only aides-de-cuisine—to which it has been replied that this would not have been said if the writer had known what is the " expenditure " of the personal staff of a General commanding in a pitched battle. It may be added that only in India would such a personal affair as this have been elevated into such importance by the publication of all its minutest details. Want of interest in other affairs makes this squabble intensely sensational in India, but we do not think that we have ever waded through such unreadable matter in our life.

be the soldier. If the officer thinks that his duties are limited to parade duties, there is small hope for the moral character of the men. More than twenty years ago an affectionate exhortation on this subject was anonymously addressed to the officers of the European army in India. It has since been published in the collected Essays of Sir Henry Lawrence, than whom no grander example of an Indian officer of the best school has ever shone out from the history of our Indian empire. We need make no apology for quoting them here, for nothing can possibly be more germane to the question under consideration.

It would be a wonder of wonders, if, neglected as he is, the European soldier were to occupy a higher place in the scale of Christian morality; but whatever he may have to answer for, it is almost beyond denial that the responsibilities of the officer are far greater than his own. The soldier's sins of commission are not so heavy as the officer's sins of omission, from which they are the direct emanations. The moral character of a regiment, be it good or bad, fairly reflects the amount of interest taken by the officers in the well-being of their men. The soldier wanders out of garrison or cantonment, and commits excesses abroad, because he has no inducements to remain within the precincts of the barrack square. He goes abroad in search of amusement—and he finds not amusement but excitement; he makes his way to the village toddy-shop, or to the punch-house; he seeks other haunts of vice; and when both money and credit are gone, perhaps he takes to the high road. This would not happen, if regimental officers really did their duty to their men.* It is not merely the duty of an officer to attend parade, to manœuvre a company or regiment, to mount guard, to sanction promotions, to see the pay issued, to sign monthly returns, and to wear a coat with a standing collar. The officer has higher duties to perform; a duty to his sovereign; a duty to his neighbour; a duty to his God, not to be discharged by the simple observance of these military formalities. He stands *in loco parentis*; he is the father of his men; his treatment of them should be such as to call forth their reverence and affection; and incite in them a strong feeling of shame on being detected by him in the commission of unworthy actions. It is his duty to study their characters; to interest himself in their pursuits; to enhance their comforts; to assist and to encourage, with counsel and with praise, every good effort; to extend his sympathy to them in distress; to console them in affliction—to show by every means in his power, that though exiles from home and aliens from their kindred, they have yet a friend upon earth, who will not desert them. These are the duties of the officer—and duties, too, which cannot be performed without an abundant recompence. There are many idle, good-hearted, do-nothing officers, who find the day too long, complain of the country and the climate, are devoured with *ennui*, and living between excitement and reaction, perhaps in time sink into hypochondriasis—but who would, if they were to follow our advice, tendered not arrogantly but affectionately, find that they had discovered a new pleasure; that a glory had sprung up in a shady place; that the day was never too long, the climate never too oppressive; that at their up-rising and their down-sitting serenity and cheerfulness were ever present—that in short they had begun a new life, as different from that out of which they had emerged, as the sunshine on the hill-top from the gloom in the abyss. Some may smile—some may sneer—some may acknowledge the truth dimly and forget it. To all we have one answer to give, couched in two very short words—*Try it*.

We need add nothing to this. We heartily echo those words, "*Try it!*"

* The wives of the officers have also a duty to perform; and the moral influence which they might exercise is great. Some ladies are willing to acknowledge this, not merely in word, but in deed.—To all would we say, "*Go and do likewise.*"

Sister Lençathea.

[TOWARDS the end of the last century, when popular princes and governments engaged, with something of romantic eagerness, in the task of reforming or abolishing monastic institutions on the Continent, many singular revelations took place of the mysteries which their walls had concealed; mysteries so long guarded by the religious veneration of the multitude for those walls, and also by the jealous watchfulness of the State authorities, while their alliance with the Church subsisted.

Strange and almost incredible secrets were brought to light by the researches of the inquirers; much also, to satisfy public curiosity on these hitherto almost forbidden topics, was doubtless invented, or highly coloured in the telling. But we must guard ourselves from supposing that what seems improbable, according to the habits of our age of publicity, could not therefore have occurred in days when many a dark transaction took place under the cover not only of religious but even of domestic privacy. How much of substantial foundation there may be for the history disclosed in the following pages, the translator is unable to suggest. The events described must evidently have taken place in Germany, though the German narrator has thought proper, apparently for purposes of disguise, to envelop, in a thin Italian costume, the names and rank of the personages concerned in them. This circumstance may also account for some particulars of convent manners, such as the open familiarity of the director with the sisterhood of the convent, more in accordance with honest German ways than those of more suspicious Italy.]

After I had received priests' orders (said the confessor, recounting the story of his life), I became curate in a small country village. Here I commenced my study of mankind, by making myself closely acquainted with the wants and the ways of my simple congregation. After three years' duty there, I was removed to a cure in a large city. In my new line of life I had of course the opportunity of becoming more extensively conversant with my fellow-creatures; yet not, perhaps, so familiarly, because their hearts were less open to me than those of the more child-like rustics among whom I had hitherto dwelt. Passing from one office to another, I was at last appointed spiritual director to the convent of Ursuline nuns at ——. And here a new and a very painful, if very instructive, field of observation opened itself to me. In my former avocations, I had possessed opportunities of studying the hearts of women, of all ages and positions, from the peasant-girl to the lady of rank. But I had, as yet, no idea of those terrible secrets which familiarity with the

strivings and workings of the female soul, under the unnatural compression of the cloister and the vow, was now to disclose to me. I carry about with me the burden of many such disclosures. They must remain buried in my solitary remembrance. My duty to Heaven as a consecrated priest, my duty to my confiding penitents as a man, impose on me equally a rigorous silence. One exception only I am about to make, because, under the strange circumstances of the case, I feel not only permitted, but as I may say invited, by the tacit instigation of her who was concerned in it, to reveal its mysteries.

I had won so thoroughly, and I must add, by honesty and uprightness, the confidence of the lady superior of the convent, that she would undertake nothing without calling me first into counsel.

One day—it was the eve of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin—she sent one of the convent servants to fetch me. She received me, not in her chamber as usual, but in the passage leading to it. There was, she said, a stranger in her room. The portress of the convent, on opening the outer door that morning, had found a strange young woman sitting on the stone bench outside. She had apparently passed the night there. To the questions of the portress, she replied that she wanted to be received into the convent. For what purpose? As a nun, lay sister, maid-servant even. “The portress admitted her to me. She gave me her name and place of birth, and repeated to me the requests she had addressed to the portress. I explained to her the impossibility of complying with them; how our numbers were full, and other rules respecting admission could not be complied with in her case. She fell at my feet, wept bitterly, prayed me in God’s name to receive her. She has, she says, no other refuge in the world, and if driven from the convent must only seek the way to the nearest deep water.

“There is something so earnest and determined in her manner,” said the abbess, “that I really dare not repulse her as I had intended; and I have sent for you to ask your counsel?”

“Before I can give it,” I replied, “I must talk with the maiden myself.” The abbess led me to her room.

I found there even more than I had conjectured. The visitor was a young female of extraordinary beauty, and noble figure. Her black eyes gleamed, even proudly, through her tears. Her black hair fell in abundant ringlets around a finely formed bust. Her dress was of the simplest burgher class. At first sight I set her down as a city damsel of more than usual refinement, whom some mischance or other had moved to seek this refuge.

“Is it your serious purpose,” I asked her, “to be received into this convent?”

She answered with a steady look and voice, “It is my fixed, unchangeable purpose.”

“What brings you to us? Is it poverty, or unhappy love, or an unruly temper, or caprice, or a real desire for the life of a recluse?”

"Only a longing to consecrate my life in solitude to God."

"That is a noble resolution. But can you answer for it, that your mind will not alter?"

"That my year of probation must show."

"And have you no refuge in the world but this convent?"

"None in the world."

"Suppose our rules made it impossible for us to receive you?"

"My lot would be a pitiable one."

"What would you do?"

"Throw myself into the first water I could find."

"Then it is despair which brings you to the convent? Such an offering could not be acceptable to God."

"Do not call it despair. But if it were so, the results would show that I can serve God in this state with a happy mind."

"Do you not believe that one may serve God also out of the cloister?"

"Surely. But the world is now nothing to me. I have no ties to it."

"Have you any crime on your soul, on account of which the world has renounced you?"

(With a smile.) "Oh, no. I bring to God a pure conscience."

"Do you know whether your friends would not disapprove of your resolution?"

"I have no friends."

"Or your parents?"

"I have no longer a father. My mother has been dead many years."

"Who are you, and whence come you?"

"I am a poor orphan, from ———. My father was a merchant; he met with misfortunes."

"Your name?"

"What matters a name? Johanna D——."

"You must pardon my next question; are you free from all attachment, lawful or unlawful? Do you bring a virgin soul to the cloister?"

"Heaven knows my heart; I am an honourable maiden."

I was overcome, and yet hardly perswaded. I counselled the abbess to accept Johanna as a lay sister; and the girl thanked me on her knees.

"What do you think of her?" said the abbess, when we were alone.

"Of all the females whom I have received into this convent, none has appeared to feel such passionate gratitude towards me."

"I must confess," I said, "that I suspend for the present my judgment on her. I will only say, she seems excited and enthusiastic."

"I am the more glad that I received her," said the good abbess.

"She might have executed her threat. Tranquillity here will, at all events, calm her mind, and the rest time will show."

And time only confirmed the abbess's satisfaction with her charitable resolution. Johanna, in her low estate of lay sister, became gradually the favourite, and example, of the convent. She was active, dexterous, obedient,

persevering : most eager to execute, and, if possible, anticipate, every duty imposed upon her. Her accomplishments as a sempstress, and in other feminine work, were the marvel of the community. And the time not devoted to such occupation was spent in earnest prayer. Recreation she could scarcely be persuaded to take. Always amiable and helpful among the sisterhood, it was nevertheless noticed that she made no special friends ; all her associates seemed to stand equally high in her favour. This particularly pleased the abbess, as it left no room for that petty partisanship and caballing which are the curse of convents. I had, myself, frequent occasions for conversation with her ; and I must own that I endeavoured, by every little art, to surprise her secret, for such I was convinced she had. But her acuteness enabled her to evade all my endeavours. Her understanding, and even her knowledge, surprised me ; and though I held her at first for a little romantic, her quiet, sensible, unobtrusive demeanour, through a period of several months, effaced to a certain extent this impression.

Johanna had been regularly admitted a novice, and I was now directed by the abbess to prepare her for taking the vows at the approaching end of her probation. I had often performed this duty for others, and generally found that it was an easy task : a few commonplace exhortations, easily given and readily received, sufficed to confirm the ordinary class of novices in their vocation. I was not long in perceiving that on Johanna's quick understanding and energetic nature all such trivialities had no effect whatever. And at the same time—now that the hour for which she had to all appearance so much longed was approaching—the cheerfulness which had hitherto distinguished her seemed to subside, and a fitful but increasing melancholy to take possession of her soul. She would pray for half a day together in the chapel, before the picture of Santa Maria del Pianto, so rapt in her enthusiasm that I have stood close beside her without her perceiving me. Her bosom heaved tumultuously ; deep, long sighs seemed to force themselves from her heart, as if under the pressure of a heavy burden. When she thus knelt, with folded hands and immovable, before the blessed image, she seemed like one who was expecting to be addressed by a supernatural voice ; and then her lips would move, as if in answer to her unseen companion. She grew gradually sadder and more reserved, and her bodily frame seemed to suffer with her soul. The abbess and nuns held her for an incipient saint, and were proud of having such an *estatica* among them, and that in the person of so universal a favourite as Johanna. I, more amply conversant with the dark ways which lead to religious insanity, looked on with deep concern and fear.

On one occasion, having communicated to the abbess my apprehensions on account of this strange and strangely interesting girl, I received a message to pay the venerable mother a visit. I repeated what I had urged before. "Your anxiety comes too late," said the abbess, with a smile. "How!" said I, eagerly: "you cannot mean that her reason has already given way?" "By no means," said the abbess; "but she is

here, and shall speak for herself." She called her in, and Johanna entered. What was my astonishment, to see before me, not the melancholy enthusiast whom I had last seen, but the same bright, satisfied, cheerful creature that she had appeared to be during the first months of her sojourn! Her modest smile, her colour, her beauty, all had returned to her. She brought with her a basketful of needlework. The abbess could not repress her astonishment at the amount, and the perfection, of the work thus executed. "It is wonderful, indeed," she said. "Take with you this new task to perform; but mind not to over-exert yourself, or injure your eyes." With a graceful reverence and a light step, the lovely novice departed.

"I confess," said I to the abbess, "that I cannot tell what to make of her. The longer I observe, the less I understand her. I have learnt to know many human beings; but all my experience is wasted here. Such profound melancholy—and then so sudden a return to good humour.

"I can understand it no better than yourself," said the abbess. "I can only wish all my nuns were as good, as obedient and attentive as she is. But she is a mystery. No one from without makes inquiries after her. Shall we ever discover who she really is?"

"If not by accident, I doubt it. I have made every effort in vain to learn anything from herself."

"So have I. But she always abides by her first answer:—'I am of such a name and place; I have no father, and my mother has been long dead.' 'Johanna!' I have answered, 'speak the truth; I am very sure you have more to tell than this.' 'I have said the truth,' she would reply, in tears; 'I am an honest girl.' I cannot make up my mind to torment her further. But that she is something more than she avows, I have no doubt."

"Have you watched to find out whether she ever writes letters, or receives them?"

"I have. It is impossible she can have written a line. And all letters which arrive pass through my hands."

"Yet it is still possible inquiry may be made for her. Will you not delay a little longer the period for her taking the veil?"

"I have delayed it already, until I have felt myself unjust towards one who longs so intently for the privilege, and is so worthy of it."

"At all events, permit me to put her through a farther course of preparation."

And I devoted myself, most earnestly and most conscientiously, to this perplexing task. That I still sought, and even by artifice, to wind myself if possible into her secret, I cannot deny; but all my efforts were in vain against her shrewdness and her determination. She felt, or assumed, indignation at my tactics. "I am an honourable maiden," she repeated, over and over again, "and you set to work with me as a detective with a runaway criminal, an adventurer, a swindler. How can you expect me to return open-hearted confidence for treatment like this, or to be other than

you often see me—sullen and reserved?" Foiled in this direction, I tried her in another. That she was more familiar with the world than was consistent with her story, I had no doubt. Instead of following the confessor's ordinary course of depreciating its attractions, I painted them in the highest colours. I adjured, I implored her not to relinquish society; not to throw away innocent, earthly enjoyment in a delusive longing for imaginary perfection; not to mistake, as so many had done within my knowledge, to the destruction of soul as well as body, disappointment, or pique, or grievous sorrow, for real vocation. All in vain. She listened to my eloquence with a slightly contemptuous smile; she did not doubt my kind intentions in thus warning her against an overhasty step; she did not depreciate those secular pleasures which I depicted to her; but she had lost everything dear to her in this world, and with that loss all interest in it, and her heart was solely set on a religious life.

Once—and once only—I seemed on the point of penetrating within the guarded boundary.

I had been dwelling on some cases with which I was personally acquainted, where religious insanity had followed a rash taking of the vows. One of these victims belonged to our convent, and was known by name to her. She asked me the cause of her calamity.

"I believe," said I, "that her affections had been fixed, in the world, on some one of whose death she suddenly heard; that on this she became a nun, and afterwards, when too late, was apprised that he still lived.

She almost started back, and the colour left her face. "That is indeed a pitiable lot," she murmured.

"And what more likely than that the same terrible deceit should occur again; if not precisely in that form, at least in something resembling it?—that the unhappy victim, just when the irrevocable vow had separated her from outer life for ever, should discover that the overmastering regret which had driven her into the snare was unfounded—that the shipwreck, which she had deemed total, was partial only, or was altogether imaginary—that the clouds were about to clear away from her young life, just when she imagined them closing in utter darkness? How would it be with you—oh, Johanna—if you, too, were to make this fatal discovery when to make it could only light within you the never-dying fire of disappointment and impious despair?"

"Then, indeed," she muttered with a broken voice, "I should be of all women most miserable. But it cannot be."

And to all efforts of mine to open any farther the door, which I for a moment fancied I had unlocked, she remained utterly impassive. She only repeated her firm resolution to take the veil, and her entreaties that no further delay might be interposed.

"I remain as undecided as before," I said to the abbess. "Either Johanna is almost a saint, or she is the most consummate hypocrite with whom I ever made acquaintance."

"I accept the alternative," said the kind-hearted superior. "Heaven shall judge between me and Johanna. I will not abandon the orphan, who has edified me for these many months by her obedience, her virtue, and her piety. She shall have her wish."

The decisive ceremony soon followed; and Johanna went through it with calm resolution, and every appearance of deep devotion. All those who had assembled to witness the proceeding were edified as they looked on her: the young were enchanted with her beauty; and matrons wept over her tears of joy and sympathy. If her voice for once faltered, and a convulsive effort of self-restraint passed over her features, at the moment of pronouncing the awful vow, every trace of emotion had disappeared from face and forehead before she lifted her eyes from the ground. Her nun's attire became her infinitely, and she was pronounced by all the handsomest inmate of the convent.

Soon after her admission, however, the melancholy fit returned upon her. But she performed all her new duties with the most zealous alacrity: continued punctually obedient to the abbess, and full of attentions for all her associates; while at the same time she appeared rapt in devotion day and night, and even her hours of ordinary occupation were hours of prayer also, for she sang psalms continually at her work.

After half a year thus passed, her cheerfulness seemed gradually to return. The portress of the convent was lately dead; and the exemplary sister Leucatheia (such was the religious name bestowed on Johanna by the bishop at her admission) was appointed to the vacant place to the satisfaction of all.

She fulfilled its duties, for a long time, to equally universal admiration. They brought her, comparatively speaking, into much contact with the outer world. Her constant occupation in answering inquiries at the gate, conveying messages, discussing matters of business with strangers, and transacting no small share of the affairs of the convent, seemed to leave her scarcely an opportunity for relapsing into that melancholy to which she had appeared subject. Her fits of sadness were forgotten by the sisterhood, and so was her questionable origin.

One day, however, on advancing to greet her as usual, I was struck with the recurrence of the old expression, which had so much saddened and perplexed me, on her countenance. "She is much altered," said the abbess, in answer to my question: "I fear a fit of her former depression is impending over her. The sisters whose cells are nearest to hers, hear her weep and sob in the night, and talk as if in conversation with some one. She prays more zealously than ever, and spends hours, as formerly, in a kind of rapture at the feet of Santa Maria del Pianto."

Leucatheia now entered with a letter for the abbess. I was looking fixedly at her mournful features, when sisters Agatha and Lucia rushed suddenly into the room. "Venerable mother," they began—but suddenly lost the power of speech, as they stared, with open, terrified eyes, at Leucatheia.

"What is the matter, you hasty, noisy girls, that you frighten me so?"

Both.—"Oh, God! Leucathe!"

Leucathe.—"What is this?"

Abbess.—"What have you to say against her? Here she is—speak: but one at a time."

"Nothing to say against her: she is our dear, good sister; but when we saw her just now, we were so frightened!"

"You, Agatha, tell me the story."

"I—I—we went, just now, to the altar of Santa Maria del Pianto. There we saw Leucathe kneeling and praying so earnestly."

(I observed Leucathe's countenance strangely disturbed.)

"She sank all at once to the ground. We hastened to her: she was cold, lifeless to all appearance: we thought she had fainted, and hastened to you to get cordials for her; and here, to our terror, we find her standing beside you—her whom we had just left lying, as if dead, at the foot of the altar."

We all looked astonished at each other.

"Are you sure," said the abbess, "that your eyes did not deceive you?"

"We are ready to die in your presence, if we have not seen what we say."

"Did you go into the chapel, Leucathe?"

She (composedly).—"Not a step."

She moved as if to leave us.

"Stay here," said the abbess, "and do not stir from your place. We will go together to the altar. If these girls' story is true, she whom they have seen will be lying there still. She cannot have recovered so soon."

Leucathe trembled and shook: an anguish as of death made large drops of perspiration stand on her brow.

We went into the chapel. A nameless feeling of dread overmastered me. It was true! There was our Leucathe: not in a fainting fit, as described: but kneeling, in a rapture of devotion, before the image. The nuns crossed themselves in silence. At this moment the Leucathe, who was following us, stepped in. When she beheld her double self, she uttered a scream of terror, and fell backward. We hastened to her help: there was no sign of life in her: we raised her, to carry her to her bed: when we looked round, the other Leucathe, at the altar, had disappeared.

"Heaven help us," said the abbess, "she has seen her *wraith*! it is the token of her death." She was removed to her cell, where she lay, apparently at death's door, many days; and yet during that time several nuns asserted that they had seen her, sometimes in the chapel, sometimes at her accustomed gate; but we set these revelations down to the credit of fancies excited by the strange scene which we had actually witnessed. Slowly she recovered, and prayed to be admitted to the sacraments. Once more I had to undertake the task of confessing her, but she disclosed nothing but trifling every-day faults, such as no one but a nun would ever think

of confessing at all. She denied, as obstinately as ever, the existence of any secret. I gave her absolution, and extreme unction, which she received to the edification of all. But after the celebration she grew gradually better, and seemed as if inspired with a new life. She recovered. She was active and helpful as ever; lively, and full of spirit; quick even in her movements, which had not been observed in her before; she became once more the favourite of all, and the weird sight which we had once seen only haunted us like a half-forgotten bad dream.

Such she remained for more than a year. And then (it seems trivial, yet is indispensable for my purposes to chronicle the vacillations of her mental condition), the melancholy fit returned anew, and grew so on her in the course of another twelvemonth, as to seem likely to end in the gloom of fixed despair.

On the morning before the eve of Saint Peter and Paul, when I came to the convent to hear the confessions of the nuns who wished to communicate in order to obtain the plenary indulgence accorded for that day, I found the sisterhood in the most frightful confusion. Every one was running against another, the inmates were crossing and blessing themselves, and lamenting, as if the last judgment was at hand. They collected in groups in the corridors, talking vehemently and gesticulating to each other.

I was taken to the superior. "Only think, reverend father," she said, "how one's judgment may be deceived. Could you have believed that the pious, devout Leucatheia—she who though still living was praised as a saint—she whom I set before all the members of the convent as an example of holiness—has after all deluded the whole of us? That she is the greatest and most shameless of hypocrites?"

"Inconceivable!"

"So it was to me; and I could scarcely believe my eyes when they brought her to me to-day."

"What is her crime?"

"This morning, when the sacristaness was going through the corridor to the choir, on her way to ring the bell for matins, she found our portress, this saint of a Leucatheia, in a lady's secular dress, just about to escape through the gate. She seizes on the fugitive, and pulls her back. Leucatheia falls on her knees, and prays her for God's sake not to inform against her; she promises to return at once to her cell and to keep quiet, if only she is not betrayed to the sisterhood. But the sacristaness would not attend to her, and called for help. The other nuns came hurrying in, and dragged Leucatheia to me. Conceive my terror and astonishment when the hypocrite was brought before me in complete lay travelling attire, and made her confession to me! She could not deny that she had been out of the convent, but declared that a restless conscience had made her return to it. The nuns heaped reproaches on her, and some of them would have actually ill-treated her had I not rescued her from them by ordering her into the convent prison. I will not and cannot decide on such a

matter by myself. I mean to hold a solemn chapter with my nuns, and judgment will be given according to the voice of the majority."

"But are the majority always the wisest?"

"Therefore I pray you, reverend father, not to abandon me, but to give me your best assistance."

I accompanied the abbess to the chapter; impressing on her as earnestly as I could the necessity of acting in such a matter with infinite forethought and consideration. However strong appearances might be on one side, a single circumstance forgotten or misreported, I said, might often suffice to alter the whole character of a transaction.

We went into the chapter-room. The benches were covered with black; on a red carpet stood a table, in the same sable attire. On it were placed a crucifix, a death's head, and a bell. Not far off was another table, with a chair and writing materials for the registrar of the tribunal.

The abbess addressed the assembled nuns solemnly and touchingly, praying them to give the accused the full benefit of every doubt and misgiving which might arise in their hearts, but at the same time to remember the awful purpose of justice for which they were met together. And then followed an earnest prayer, in which we all took part. Two lay sisters now brought in Leucatheia, and set her before the abbess, on the other side of the black table.

She showed not the slightest confusion. Her eye wandered freely round the scene. No sign of terror, or of anguish, disfigured her beautiful countenance. She had on a white linen travelling robe, and a linen scarf, wound turban-fashion round her head.* She stood undisturbed and unabashed, and awaited her doom with a calmness which astonished me, and which could only belong either to the most innocent, or the most obdurate of her sex.

"On what account are you here?" asked the abbess.

"To answer such questions as may be put to me."

"What induced you to leave the convent, and to commit perjury before God and Holy Church?"

"What induced me? That I cannot fully explain to you. And the particulars would needs be indifferent to you. I fled from the convent and my vows, because an earlier vow, which I had sworn on the altar of nature and of love, called me away. But my conscience soon awoke, and punished my apostasy so severely, that I came back to you of my own accord."

All at once.—"You came back?"

Sister Lucia.—"Did I not fortunately arrest you just as you were running away? Liar!"

Leucatheia, composedly.—"No. When you thought I was escaping,

* I infer from this costume, that the date of the occurrences described was about sixty or seventy years ago.

I was in the act of returning. And I should have gone back quietly into my cell, unperceived by you or any one else.

Abbess. "Then you were absent the whole night?"

"Yes."

"How long were you absent?"

"Two years and six months."

They all looked confounded at each other.

"She does not know what she says; she has lost her senses; she is inventing a romance."

"No; I am telling the truth. I repeat, that I have lived the last two years and six months outside the convent.

"But where did you pass that time?"

"That I may not and will not say."

A Nun.—"You perceive how she lies; she is mad; she imagines she has been absent; the devil—Heaven defend us—has blinded her."

"Permit me to examine her," said I. "You will all allow that, during the years she has passed here, she has never, up to this hour, shown the slightest sign of madness. That is not a calamity which comes so suddenly and without prognostics, especially on one so calm, so collected, as you now see her. I believe that she *was* absent last night; her meaning, in adding to her confession this impossible story about the length of her absence, must now be investigated."

Leucatheia had looked at me, during my address, without altering a feature. "You give yourself much unnecessary trouble, reverend father," she said, "in endeavouring to defend my understanding from the suspicions expressed of it. I repeat, of my own accord, that I have been absent from the convent two years and a half."

"That is to say, by night, remaining there the day?"

"No: day and night, without interruption. I was more than six and forty miles from hence."*

"Six and forty miles!" murmured the bewildered nuns.

"Even so."

I.—"And what was the name of the place?"

"That I will never disclose."

"Oh, you shameless liar!" screamed one of the nuns; "now I will tear off the mask from you before the whole chapter. Can you deny that it was you who yesterday, at vespers, stood by me, and joined with me in the 'confitebor?'"

"Was it not you who intoned the lesson?" cried another.

Leucatheia.—"Not I. For two years and a half I have not even thought of vespers, much less sung a psalm."

A Nun.—"Will you make fools of us before our very faces?"

Another.—"Or could it have been your ghost?"

Leucatheia, with a scornful smile.—"Perhaps."

* German miles—equal to two hundred English.

The Sacristaness.—"Permit me, venerable mother, to put an end to this shameless imposture with a single word. You all know that we had the tonsure last week. Sister Leucatheia, did I not myself cut off your hair?"

Leucatheia.—"No."

The others.—"How dare you deny it? We were all present when she cut your hair."

Sacristaness.—"Since she will speak falsehoods, remove the band from her head."

Leucatheia tore away the scarf herself, and her long magnificent hair fell in sable masses over her shoulders and back.

"What is this?" they all cried in dismay. "We saw her hair cut with our own eyes; and these locks? This is magic; she is in league with Satan."

Leucatheia.—"Examine, if you wish, whether it is false hair."

The examination took place: it was her own!

"This is the jugglery of hell!" they exclaimed with one voice, and their amazement seemed to have reached the utmost point. Just then we were interrupted by the appearance of a body of the police, with its chief at their head. He excused himself with the utmost courtesy for his boldness in intruding on such an assembly; but he was compelled to it, he said, by his duty, and in the interest of the establishment itself. At ten o'clock last night a carriage had stopped at the door of the convent. The door opened, and a person whom he recognized at once for the pious sister Leucatheia, known to him as portress, attired in a white travelling dress, hurried out of it: a young gentleman lifted her into the carriage, and the coachman drove away immediately with such swiftness, that they had found it impossible to arrest him. The carriage went directly to the city gate, and thence, it was thought, along the road to V——. He had already sent officers in pursuit, and hoped that the fugitives would soon be brought back.

Who can describe the confusion and terror which pervaded the whole assembly? Leucatheia alone remained unmoved, without changing place or attitude. "How can this be?" exclaimed the abbess, in the utmost perplexity. "You declare that your people saw Leucatheia taken away?"

"We declare it on our conscience and official duty."

Abbess.—"Nevertheless here she stands."

The chief of the police looked round, and shrank back in affright. "God forgive me!" he said; "that is the very same person who eloped last night. Her dress, and her appearance, identical. How comes she here, while my officers are in search for her on all the roads?"

I deemed it time to put an end to the bewildering scene. I thanked the chief of the police for his attention to the concerns of the convent; and he was dismissed with full powers obtained from the abbess, to arrest and detain the fugitives wherever they might be found.

When the officers of the police had gone, the abbess said to me,—

"What is the object of all this? why try to arrest any one? Is not Leucatheia with us?"

"That," said I, "cannot be answered in a moment; but, on reflection, you will perceive that the precaution is not superfluous."

The Abbess (to Leucatheia).—"I adjure thee by the everlasting, all-merciful God! say, who art thou?"

Leucatheia.—"You know me. Your Leucatheia for these years past."

"Speak the truth. All depends on it."

"So I believe too. But what I have said is the purest truth. I am ready to die for it."

"You, Leucatheia, took the vows in this convent?"

"I did."

"Were you not carried off from it last night?"

"No."

"And you declare that you have been absent two years and six months? Yet you lived all that time among us, and no one missed you for a single minute?"

"I suppose so."

"Is it possible you can be 'double'?"

"I know myself only as one person. Whether it is possible that I can also be another living being in this material world, that I cannot tell."

"If you were absent, as you say, then, in order to save your honour, you ought to tell us where. Name the place."

"That I never will."

"Do you not believe that we could force you to it?"

"No! not if you employed torture."

"What fate do you expect?"

"I am in your power, and abide all that awaits me."

"Are you ready to swear, and upon that oath to take the holy communion, that you have in truth been absent from this convent two years and six months since your profession?"

"I can do so with a safe conscience."

Leucatheia was remanded to her prison, and eight days were given her to reflect, whether she would undergo the fearful ordeal of solemnly swearing to the truth of her incredible tale. Meanwhile repeated announcements were brought us from the police, that Leucatheia had been seen, sometimes at one post-station, sometimes at another, in company of a young cavalier; the description was so minute that it was impossible not to recognize the person described as the same with her who was actually confined in our convent prison; but the authorities were always at fault—always just too late to catch the fugitive.

The captive endured her imprisonment with all the patience, and with all those outward signs of piety, with which her former life had made us familiar. The day for the awful ceremony arrived at last. I did my

utmost to render it as impressive as possible—to awaken the terrors of conscience, and bend the obstinate resolution of the sinner. With the chalice in one hand, and a crucifix in the other, Leucatheia repeated, with unflinching lips and unchanged demeanour, the long and circumstantial form of oath which I repeated to her, comprising the details of which she had asserted the truth. Thereupon she received, devoutly, the blessed sacrament; and I could perceive tears streaming from the eyes of many of the nuns as she did so. I addressed the chapter in a few words, in which I endeavoured to give the event a colour—I will not say of the mysterious, for deeply mysterious it was in truth to me—but of the supernatural; and advised that no further inquiry should be made, the accused having been admitted to pledge herself by the most solemn of all declarations to the truth of her tale. The chapter absolved her from all punishment. True, Leucatheia had confessed a breach of her vow and a long absence from the convent, and had brought ocular proof in support of her confession. But then, all the time, Leucatheia had been in her place within its walls, and fulfilling assiduously all her duties. The whole event was suppressed, and no one spoke more of it. At the end of the ceremony, Leucatheia requested the abbess to relieve her of the charge of portress; and implored that she might be spared farther intrusion for the last few days of her life. She had vowed to God, she said, not to speak another word among her sisters after that day; and God had, in reply, revealed to her the day of her death, which would be on the feast of the patroness of the order—Saint Ursula, the 31st of October. Amidst the awe-struck silence of the assembly, she gave back the keys of her office to the abbess, and retired to her cell.

From that time forth she kept absolute silence. She prayed in silence. I saw her several times: she moved about like a living corpse. Early in October she became confined to her bed. On the thirtieth—the eve of Saint Ursula—she sent for me. “You,” she said, “have ever been considerate and tender towards me. Your behaviour deserves my confidence. The mask now falls, and a fearful eternity opens upon me. I here impart to you the true history of my life. Think of me what and how you please. Communicate the contents of this paper to others, or whelm them in the dust of oblivion; it is all the same to me. Only promise me, not to open the packet which I give you, until I am buried.” I promised. I performed for her the last offices of the church for the sinner. On the following morning—the day which she had predicted—she was found dead in her bed. On the third day she was buried. Not until then did I open the packet.

“You were in the right, reverend father,”—so her manuscript began—“when you, once told the abbess that I was more than I appeared to be. When you read this, and the cold earth has covered me, you will know that I was the Princess Pauline,—daughter of the Duke of —”

The narrative then proceeded to recount in detail the particulars of the early life of the unfortunate writer. It was evident that, on the brink of the grave, she dwelt on these recollections, and dallied with them, with the voluptuous and regretful melancholy of one who still clings fast to the world, even while the inexorable voice which summons her away from it is sounding in her ears. But I must abridge this portion of her story, in order to come more quickly to that which connects itself with my own observation and experience.

Princess Pauline was destined by her father, in virtue of family engagements, to marry an ally of his house, the Prince of T——. He was a young and accomplished cavalier, who by his personal advantages alone might well have gained the heart of a maiden; but hers was given inevitably, before she had attained her sixteenth birthday, to a young nobleman whom she chose only to designate by a fictitious name, as the Marquis Montano. The tale which followed was the usual one of youthful passion and paternal opposition. After violent scenes with her father, who threatened her with his irreconcilable hatred unless she consented to become the bride of him for whom he destined her, she escaped from the duke's palace in company with her lover. They found a priest who blessed their union in secret. They fled together: she in the dress of an ordinary citizen's daughter; he, disguised as one of his own servants, in order to avoid detection. This they succeeded in doing; but as they approached the end of their day's journey, driving through a wood to reach a small secluded town where they intended to rest, they were attacked by robbers. The princess, in the terror of the moment, sprang out of the carriage, and managed to conceal herself in the wood. She remained hidden there all night. In the morning she found her way back to the scene of the outrage. The ground was covered with blood. A horrible presentiment seized her. She made her way to a neighbouring inn, and there learned from the host that a young man had been killed in the attack on the carriage; the description only too exactly suited her husband Montano. She visited the spot pointed out as his grave: for three days and nights she wept over the earth which concealed his beloved remains. Then the painful thought of suicide assailed her: but it yielded to that of devoting the remainder of her life to prayer and sorrow, in any convent which she might find hospitable enough to receive her. All thought of return to her father's court was cut off, not only by the feeling excited by the fresh memory of her beloved one, but by the fear of meeting that parent's bitter hatred—mother she had none left to receive and forgive her.

"I had no money left after paying the landlord. I had no resource but to sit all night on the stone bench at the gate of your convent, determined, if I were not received there, to throw myself into the nearest river. To your intercession I owe it, reverend father, that this crime at least was spared me. You saved me from despair. You will bear witness how earnestly I strove to show my gratitude. You will bear witness, deem

otherwise of your unhappy friend how you may, that I did no dishonour to the humble office into which you caused the superior to receive me, that I performed my duties punctually, that I passed with unblemished character through my period of probation.

"My grief for my beloved one, to which I utterly abandoned myself, was the reason which made me keep apart from all the sisterhood. I prayed day and night for his soul. I cannot deny it, I prayed also fervently, unceasingly, for my own death, that I might thus become united with my Montano once more. What effect this misery had at times on my outward demeanour, you know. But as the mere effect of time abated the sting of my grief, I became, at least to appearance, more cheerful and resigned. Such I remained, until one day reading through some accident—rare enough in these walls—a portion of a newspaper, I learnt from it that, in consequence of his vexation at the elopement of his daughter, the Princess Pauline, with the Marquis Montano, the Duke of — had undergone a stroke of apoplexy, and died on the spot. As he had only three daughters, and his duchy was a male fief of the crown, the king had invested the Count of — with it. Murderess of my father! The thought breathed desperation into my soul. Hence a vehement relapse into my former melancholy. Confidence in the mercy of Heaven, continued prayer,—then, Heaven knows, most ardent, most sincere,—were the means which rescued me once more from this state of depression. When, indeed, I thought on those vows which I had obtained, by my own solicitations, permission to take, I felt as one who is condemned by his own sentence to eternal imprisonment. But what could the world outside be to me except a prison—deprived of my love, abandoned by all, the cause, by my own wilfulness, of the death of a father?

"When you pressed me so close with your questions before my profession, I had hard work to do battle with my tongue. More than once I was on the point of avowing all. But I conquered; and in order to avoid all farther occasion of weakness, I myself urged on the day of my taking the habit with that importunity which you remember. I need scarcely say that all these rebellious thoughts, all this bitter impatience with my destiny, recurred with redoubled force as soon as the irrevocable step was taken. Yet I conquered, as you know, once more,—thanks, again, to earnest strivings with the tempter. You know how I became the favourite of the abbess, and how she entrusted to me the key of the convent—that fatal key, which opened the door to my ruin and eternal perdition.

"Heaven is my witness, I endeavoured to do my duties honestly. I found, in the variety of occupation and converse which my office procured me, an innocent means of retaining and increasing my precarious cheerfulness. One day I was standing at the gate; I expected to see you. A young man passed by. We recognized each other at the first glance. Montano! Pauline!"

I must here again reduce to a mere abstract the communication of the deceased Leucatheia. She dwelt only too complacently, and with all the particularity of a memory concentrated within itself by long and violent repression of the feelings, on the one bright event which chequered the darkness of her unhappy history. The meeting between Montano and herself, at the gate of the convent, was simply accidental. The belief in his death at the hands of the robbers was a mistaken one. He had, as has been already said, put on the livery of one of his own servants by way of disguise. His coachman, a young man of similar stature with himself, and clad in the same uniform, was killed by the shots of the assailants; while he was himself wounded only, taken up senseless, and carried to the house of a charitable neighbour. It is easy, therefore, to understand how the mistake arose which deceived the unfortunate Pauline. Montano, on the other hand, spent in vain his time and labour in endeavouring to acquire intelligence of his lost bride. After she had been traced to the inn, where she had last lodged before going to the convent, no clue could be found to her whereabouts. Slowly, and in despair, he relinquished the search. He wandered, without aim or purpose, over many regions; and attracted back at last to the neighbourhood of the spot where he and his love had been parted, Fate led him to her arms again.

What was now to be done? Although the union between them was sacred in their eyes, and as they deemed in those of Heaven; yet the absence of parents' consent and of other legal formalities would have rendered it impossible for him to set up his claim against the claim of the Church; independently of the heavy punishment to which Pauline, as Leucatheia, had exposed herself by her fraudulent misrepresentation to the convent authorities. Irresolute, and uncertain of their future destiny, they lived for a time only in the present, under the enchantment of a passion consecrated by the purest mutual devotion. They met in secret, availing themselves of the facilities which Pauline's control of the keys of the convent placed at their disposal. For many months, lost to the sense of danger, as well as of duty, Pauline abandoned herself to the enjoyment of her lover's society. The consequences of their reunion now threatened to become evident, and the prospect filled them with terror. They dared not expose their secret to the world; but Pauline's temporary removal, at least, from the convent, became absolutely necessary.

In this extremity a strange resource suggested itself. Pauline had a twin sister, the Princess Eugenia; allied to her by one of those almost preternatural resemblances which defy, at times, even the perspicacity of the nearest relatives. Foiled by Pauline's obstinate refusal to follow his wishes, her father, shortly before his death, had endeavoured to set up again his favourite project of an union between his family and that of the Prince of T——, by substituting Eugenia as the latter's bride for her sister. The prince, as has been said, was deserving of a maiden's love; and Eugenia was brought with little difficulty to accede to the project. They

were affianced. But then came the death of the duke, the transfer of his fief to a distant male connexion, the disruption, for the time, of the ties which bound his family together. The Prince of T——, meantime, deeply involved in the political complications of the period, found it necessary to postpone his nuptial projects. He departed, to lead for some years a wandering life of political missions and public business. Eugenia was living by herself, at a distant country-house of the family, forty-six miles from the town in which the Ursuline convent was situated.

Pauline relied on the tenderness and self-devotion of her sister, and she was not deceived. The plan arranged between them, in writing and through the intervention of Montano, was this:—Montano was to bring Eugenia to the convent. By the help of the portress's power of admission, Pauline was to introduce Eugenia to her own cell. They were to remain a short time together—concealment for this purpose, although hazardous, seemed possible to one so well acquainted with the hiding-places of the convent as Pauline, and with the extreme regularity of its observances—until Eugenia had learnt the ways of the place, and could perform the part of Pauline without danger of detection. Then Pauline was to put on the worldly dress of her sister, and remove to Eugenia's country-house, until the necessity for her absence was past; after which she was to return to the convent, resume her duties there until at least some change of plan could be suggested, and liberate her sister.

The first part of the scheme was successfully performed as it had been arranged. Pauline provided her sister with a nun's dress, and for some days they remained together in the convent. Although they used every art to avoid detection, yet on one occasion their wit failed them; and in this manner the strange apparition of Sister Leucatheia kneeling before the altar of Maria del Pianto, at the very same time that she was in attendance on the abbess in her room, was easily accounted for. Frightened at this narrow escape from detection, Pauline judged it best to affect a dangerous illness. For a few days longer, Eugenia remained concealed about the convent, but dared not keep in her sister's cell; and this is the reason why she was occasionally seen in the corridor, chapel, and elsewhere. At last they seized a favourable opportunity to effect the exchange. Eugenia remained in Pauline's bed; Pauline, in her sister's attire, hastened with her Montano to the distant residence of Eugenia. It had been resolved, for further security, that not even the Prince of T—— himself should be admitted to the secret, and that his letters to his betrothed should, during the interval, be opened and answered by Pauline. When her time approached, she and her husband removed to a neighbouring town; here she was brought to bed of a boy; and from thence she divided her time between acting Eugenia at the country-house and enjoying the society of her child and her husband in the retired spot which she had chosen for her confinement.

The remainder of the unfortunate nun's avowals shall be given in her own words:—

"And now it would have been my duty to release my noble and devoted sister—her who had sacrificed freedom and happiness for me, who had entrusted to me the secrets of her love, had voluntarily submitted for my sake to the yoke of the convent, and saved me thereby from shame and destruction—out of the voluntary imprisonment which she was suffering for my sake. Alas! alas! I was too happy. The feeling of my freedom intoxicated me. Enjoying life as exquisitely as I did, at the side of my beloved and of our child, I could not resist the infatuation which made me linger on day by day in that precarious Paradise which her self-abandonment had created for me. I was continually making resolutions to perform the necessary sacrifice. As continually my cowardice gave way at the last moment. A year had passed, it was the period beyond which I had bound myself fixedly in my own mind not to delay; the next year followed it; a third glided on; and duty, gratitude, sisterly affection, all were forgotten. But I was awakened, most justly awakened, out of my dream of unrighteous pleasure by a single crushing blow.

"A fearful epidemic visited the district in which we resided. My child—my beloved one—the object, above all others, for the sake of which I had committed this grievous sin towards Heaven and my sister, was one of its first victims. Its father, who would not leave its bedside during its rapid illness, was next attacked, and expired in a few days in my wretched arms. I, the guilty one, saw them both perish, and remained untouched and unharmed. Such easy retribution as this would have been, was not meant for me.

"I was again alone in the world: I was standing bewildered beside the fresh graves of my two darlings, when a new and strange announcement recalled me to my senses. The Prince de T—— had come in search, not of me, but of his Eugenia. Reports had reached him that his betrothed was faithless; that she had yielded herself to another; reports, no doubt, arising from my sojourn in her former neighbourhood together with my deceased Montano. The error was, of course, easily removed, and my marvellous confession made. But, as soon as he had heard it, he would not admit of a day's delay without my hurrying to the rescue of his unforgotten Eugenia.

"I was ready enough to execute his wishes. But, even in my utter desolation, I could not bear the thought of returning to convent life. The coldness and oppression of that living tomb, from which my Montano had taken me away in vain, weighed with a fearful load on my imagination. To pass the brief time now left me—brief indeed, as I hoped—anywhere *in* the world—anywhere, however secluded, in the free air and light of heaven—this was all, I fancied, which was now left me to desire.

"Accordingly it was arranged between us, that after Eugenia had been safely removed, he would carry me off also. I should say that, following a precaution which I had exercised during Montano's visits, I had in my possession a second key of the outer gate. We travelled together to our destination. We stopped at an obscure inn in this town. In the evening

I went to the convent gate. I found poor Eugenia still punctually performing my office; she had made no sign, though illness and despondency had only lately brought her to a very low condition; and no one had ever imagined a difference between her and me. I prepared her for the visit of her lover, and gave her a key and a white linen travelling-dress. At ten that night the prince went with the carriage to the convent gate, where she was ready to join him. I remained, by his direction, at the inn, where he promised that they would call for me. I was dressed in a similar costume to that with which I had provided my sister. I waited till two in the morning had struck; but they returned not. Had they succeeded? I did not then know, although the police have since informed us of it. Were they prevented from revisiting the inn by some unforeseen accident? or did they abandon me in well-deserved retribution for my grievous treachery? I cannot tell; and shall never learn. Enough, that in my despair for myself, and terror for Eugenia, I returned once more to the convent. The rest you know. I should have slipped quietly into my cell, should have resumed my nun's habit, and all that has passed would have had existence for me alone, and for me only as a dream when one awakeneth, had it not been for the sacristaness's discovery. Now you have all my confidence. Deal with it, and with my memory, as you will. One circumstance only I have to explain—my exact prediction of my death. It scarcely needs such explanation. The resolute, to whom life no longer offers any prospect, save that of speedy release from it, can fix, and anticipate, their own destiny."

Presentiments.

THERE is something strangely fascinating in the discussion of matters which admit of no explanation. Utilitarians would, perhaps, look on it as a waste of breath, or censure it even more as leading to rash conclusions. Many men, as we too often see, insist on making up their mind on everything, and will have a consistent theory for every subject under the sun. The result of this is that they waver backwards and forwards with every new fact that is produced on one side or the other. If they could be content to suspend their judgment till all the facts were known, to accept each new fact as having a certain relation to the whole aspect of the case, and not as settling the whole, they would have to forego the satisfaction of laying down the law, but when they established a law it would be more generally received. It cannot be pleasant to feel that you are always contradicting yourself, that your great enemy of to-day whom you crush with such vehement sarcasm is yourself of yesterday. And though the confession of ignorance or indecision seems humiliating at first, it comes with peculiar grace from those who really endeavour to learn and to form their judgment. A Hallam can say that he has not read some book when other critics of not half his learning and not a tenth of his ability would never dream of such an avowal.

It is true that rash conclusions are more often formed in regard to subjects which lie partly out of the world, and which we can only know in part, than in regard to those that may be decided. But is this any reason for not discussing them? Or is it a waste of breath to accumulate all we can know, in order to guess at or infer what lies out of the sphere of knowledge? If it be, I am afraid many other kinds of discussion are to be classed with it. Some slight link fails us in many a chain of causes, and till we get this link our chain must needs be imperfect. But we make the best of it. The link may be faulty when it comes, or it may support our reasoning. All we can do is to make the rest as strong as we can, and allow for the possibility of correction.

I have not the slightest wish to form a theory on the subject I have placed at the head of this paper. If I attempted it, I should probably sum up my conclusions in the line which Milton applies to Socrates :

To know this only, that he nothing knew.

What can we know for certain about presentiments? We have some evidence that they do exist, and we have proof that a great many people believe in them. But we do not know how far the evidence we have is trustworthy, and we do know that the people who believe in presentiments

very seldom act on their belief. When something has been done or left undone you often hear it said, "Well, now, I had a presentiment that I ought to do or not to do this thing, and the result shows that I ought to have acted on my presentiment." But this is merely negative evidence, and, moreover, it is after the event. It would be of some value if it had been told before. It would be of more value still if the presentiment had been obeyed, and the result had been satisfactory. But if none of these three tests have been applied, or none of them have answered, the value of that presentiment is small indeed.

Thackeray says, "Surely some of the presentiments some people are always having must come true." They can hardly fail to come true pretty often if they are *ex post facto*. If all your natural feelings are interpreted as the secret voice of nature, if on leaving a dear friend or relation you make up your mind that the grief of parting forebodes your never meeting again; your presentiments may sometimes come true, though they were really no presentiments at all. But it is this habit which makes all evidence on these subjects so unsafe and insufficient. All the evidence we have on them has been suggested by the event, and there is often ground to fear that it has been inspired by the event. We hear of all the presentiments that bear fruit, but do we ever (I mean in the cases where people are always having them) hear of those that bear none? Yet if these are not taken into account, and the value of all presentiments diminished by them, the evidence is one-sided. On the whole, therefore, it is best to leave the people who are always having presentiments out of the question, and confine ourselves to the more authenticated instances which may to some extent bear out a theory.

We may safely lay it down as a rule that the essence of a true presentiment is that it shall be spontaneous. It must come at a time when you have no reason to look for it, when you are not under the influence of any fear or anxiety from known causes, when perhaps you have some difficulty in its interpretation. You must not be ill, and think you have a presentiment that you will not recover. You must not be away from home, and have a presentiment that some calamity has happened there. You must not know that a friend is in danger, and have a presentiment of his death. You must not have reason to suspect a man, and have a presentiment that he will cheat you. And why? Because in all these instances there is a simple natural cause for fear or uneasiness. In all matters where there is a natural cause we give more weight to it than to another, which may be the real cause, but is beyond the bounds of probability. If a man who suffers from heart disease is found dead on a roadside or in his bed, we at once attribute his death to his complaint, though it may afterwards appear that he was murdered. But if the man was perfectly healthy, and was known to have an implacable enemy, we should be more apt to think of murder. And so it is with presentiments. If they can be accounted for in any natural way, we must hesitate to receive them. Even where a natural solution covers some of the facts, it does not always cover them

all, and very often when we have argued away the main points of the story, there is just so much left that we are forced to say, "whether the presentiment be genuine or not, this is something that no science can explain." Call them by what name you will—presentiments, coincidences, or anything else—there are many cases which you can settle to a certain point, but no further. Many of these are admitted into the class of presentiments because they are too strange to be explained by natural laws, though they are not really presentiments. As an instance of these, I would take the story of the Jamaica planter who was ordered to England for his health, but was loth to leave the delicacies of the West Indies. At last he took a passage in a brig, but showed great uneasiness about sailing in her, telling a friend that he was convinced he would be thrown overboard. After he had sailed, all the negroes on his estate came one day in a body to this friend, and said, "The brig has been lost, Mr. — is drowned." They had no reason to give for their impression, but sure enough the brig was not heard of, and everybody concluded that she had been lost. Some time after one of her men was discovered, and he confessed that Mr. — had been thrown overboard, at the very time when the negroes were seized with the impression that the brig was lost. Mr. — had been a fierce enemy of the Baptists in Jamaica, and the captain of the brig, though Mr. — did not know of it, was a Baptist. There was a violent religious controversy between them one day, the captain suddenly appealed to his men, and they threw Mr. — overboard. Now, at first sight this case seems complete, but there is a serious flaw in it. Mr. — had been a violent partisan, and knew that he had made deadly enemies. It was quite possible that some of his enemies might be on board the ship he sailed in; if there were many Baptists in Jamaica it was more than probable; and if he had excited them against him to a certain point, it was very likely that they would take vengeance. If he had known that the captain was a Baptist, he would no doubt have chosen another ship. But that an unhealthy man, who did not want to leave Jamaica, and had made deadly enemies, should look forward with fear to a lonely voyage is nothing unnatural, nor does the fact of his fear coming true entitle it to the rank of a presentiment.

This, then, is one of the instances which we must exclude from our list. It is not the less curious, from the circumstance of the impression which seized on the negroes just at the time of their master's death. But there are plenty of other cases to which no such objection can be made; many of them are fully authenticated, and cannot be explained away. Mrs. Crowe's *Night Side of Nature*, and a small book called *Communications with the Unseen World* (which I should judge, from internal evidence, to be written by the Rev. J. M. Neale), are brimful of such stories. It is true that in all of them we have to take the writer's word. In all of them the original narrator may have departed a little from the inflexible exactness which should mark such statements. The writer in taking down the account may have imparted to it some slight inaccuracies. And

the only means of detecting these slips is cross-examination, which is the one thing denied us. But allowing for all this, the stories are almost marvellous. If we grant that one of them is true, we have enough for our purpose. One is sufficient to show that there is more in heaven and earth than is dreamt of in material philosophy, and to make us think many times before we bound the world by the evidence of our senses.

It would be superfluous to quote any of the stories given by these two authors, except in rare cases where I have anything to allege against them. But it is unfortunate that the record of presentiments should be confined to books which profess to treat that class of subjects alone, and that general history should furnish so few corroborations. Poetry gives us more. Shakspeare's treatment of presentiments is one of the most curious points in the psychology of his plays. There is something on the subject in Schiller's *Wallenstein*, and Wordsworth has devoted to it one of his minor poems. He talks of presentiments as heaven-born instincts, which shun the touch of vulgar sense :—

The tear whose source I could not guess,
The deep sigh that seemed fatherless.

Some busy foes to good, he says, lurk near them, and taint the health which they infuse; but faith proceeds from them, and bodings unsanctioned by the will, which teach us to beware. He talks of the bosom weight which no philosophy can lift, and says their instruments are—

A rainbow, a sunbeam,
A subtle smell that Spring unbinds,
Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,
An echo or a dream.*

We know full well what are the busy foes to good. One of them is the love of torturing every feeling into a presentiment. Another is the quack who has his nostrum of spiritual manifestations always at hand, and who wavers between occult science and open knavery. Another is the conviction that every one who has had a presentiment, and found it true, is a sort of seer or prophet for all time to come. The man easily persuades himself that he is waited on by mysterious agencies, and he forces himself into presentiments, as the man who has once dreamed forces himself to go on dreaming. The scene in *Wallenstein* is in this respect peculiarly significant. *Wallenstein* was just the man to be impressed by dreams or omens. He was a firm believer in the stars, and Seni came to warn him of immediate danger. He had taken a perilous step, had seen his best friends fall away from him, had found that his new friends did not trust him fully. Yet when the Countess, his sister-in-law, tells him of her dreams

* Contrast with this the noble passage in Browning's *Bishop Blougram*:—

"Just when we're safest there's a sunset touch,
A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
A chorus-ending in Euripides,
And that's enough for thousand hopes and fears," &c. &c.

and forebodings, he tries to explain them away. He says that her mind was occupied with the subject, and therefore she dreamt about it; that the foreboding was not spontaneous, but produced by her own fears. She asks if he does not believe in such warning voices, and he replies, "Yes, there are such voices; there is no doubt of that. Yet I would hardly call those warning voices which only announce what is inevitable. As the appearance of the sun paints itself on the atmosphere before it rises, so the spirit of great events strides on before them,* and to-morrow walks in to-day. I have always had strange musings on what one reads about the death of the Fourth Henry. He felt the ghost of the dagger in his breast long before the murderer Ravaillac armed himself with it. Rest fled from him, the thought seized on him in his Louvre, drove him into the open air; the coronation feast of his consort sounded to him like a funeral; he heard with boding ear the footsteps that sought him through the streets of Paris." "Does the inner boding voice say nothing to you?" asks the Countess. "Nothing," he replies; "be calm." And then the Countess tells of another dream, in which she saw Wallenstein going before her through a long passage and long never-ending halls, doors slamming all the time, till at length a cold hand touched her, and on looking to see whose it was, she found that it was Wallenstein's, while over them both a red cover seemed to be laid. "That is the red carpet of my room," says Wallenstein, interrupting her. A little later, and the doors are burst open by the murderers, and Wallenstein's body is carried across the stage wrapped in a red carpet.

Here we have the true law about presentiments laid down by a firm believer in them. Wallenstein knew that neither he, nor any of his train, could be impartial at such a moment. Anything of the nature of a warning must be suspected as springing from native apprehension. Though he himself was calm at the thought of quitting the Imperial service and joining the Swedes, his followers were full of the regrets and possibilities which a man who has resolved on a great step generally dismisses as idle, but which his friends feel strongly for him, and urge upon him. But the man himself may well feel nervous, and what is easier than to interpret his nervousness as a warning? Many of the presentiments we have in history are tainted by this blemish. In the history of Luther we hear of Melancthon being ill, and having a "presentiment" that he would die; Luther came and prayed at his bedside, and he recovered. Evidently in this case the presentiment was nothing but the natural fear of the sick man; but if this had not yielded to the stronger faith inspired by Luther's prayer, the presentiment would probably have come true. Again, when

* "Coming events cast their shadows before."—CAMPBELL, *Lochiel's Warning*. It is worth remarking that Schiller's plays contain many such coincidences, and *Wallenstein* in particular is full of them. I will not go into the subject here, but just mention that sometimes the coincidences with Shakspeare are too strong to be passed over. Such, for instance, is the "Herr, ihr habt keine Kinder" in *Tell*, which must remind us of the "He has no children" in *Macbeth*.

Luther left his wife on his last journey, she had a presentiment that he would never return. He never did return. Yet how can we tell that her presentiment was not a woman's natural uneasiness at seeing her husband start on a journey, and was interpreted after his death into a presentiment?

Mozart's presentiment of his approaching death was of the same class as Melancthon's, only, from not being properly combated, it came true. He was convinced that some one had given him poison; he said he had the taste of death on his tongue, and that he smelt the grave. There can be little doubt that all this was occasioned by overwork and an intensely nervous temperament. As soon as the composer's work was taken away from him he began to get better, but he returned to work too soon, and a relapse was the consequence. Compare with this what seems the most genuine case of a presentiment, an event occurring to Czar Paul four or five days before his assassination. He was riding, and he turned suddenly to his Grand Master of the Horse, saying, "I felt quite suffocated—I could not breathe—I felt as if I was going to die. Won't they strangle me?" The incident was related to the Russian general officer, in whose papers it is recorded, the very same evening by the Grand Master himself. It was no doubt natural that a Czar should expect to be strangled, but why should he have had this feeling of suffocation, and why should it have come to him so few days before he was actually strangled?

The definite nature of this instance places it far above others which were also realized. The story of Luther's wife is paralleled in Motley's *History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic*, by the presentiment which occurred to the wife of William the Silent as soon as she saw his assassin. She asked anxiously about the man, and added in an undertone that she had never seen so villanous a countenance. But William did not share her feeling. He made a careless reply, and conversed with his usual cheerfulness. An hour-and-a-half afterwards William was dying in the arms of his wife, and Balthazar Gérard was caught as he ran for the ramparts. The presentiment had come true; but was it a presentiment? William's wife was struck by the "agitated face" of the stranger. His countenance was villanous, or at least highly unprepossessing, for he was "low of stature, meagre, mean-visaged, muddy-complexioned." And moreover within the last two years there had been five attempts to assassinate William of Orange. All these facts combined give us the result of natural fear* on the subject of assassination, and natural repugnance at the sight of the assassin. What we want to establish a presentiment is something preternatural, an involuntary and unaccountable feeling.

A good instance of this was communicated to me by a near relation.

* Natural fear would also explain the presentiment in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, when Montague Tigg enters the lonely wood. If Mr. Dickens had wished to make the presentiment complete, and worthy of the eloquent language in which he justifies a belief in secret warnings, he should not have dwelt so much on Tigg's dread of Jonas Chuzzlewit.

A young lawyer, who had chambers in the Temple, had a nodding acquaintance with an old gentleman living on the same staircase. The old man was a wealthy old bachelor, and had a place in the country, to which he went for a week every Easter. His servants had charge of the place while he was away—an old married couple who had lived with him for twenty-seven years, and were types of the fine old English domestic. One Easter Tuesday the young lawyer was astonished to find the old gentleman on his Temple staircase, and made some remark about it. The old man asked him into his room, and said he had received a fearful shock. He had gone down as usual to his country place, had been received with intense cordiality, had found his dinner cooked to perfection, and everything as it had been from the beginning. When the cloth was removed his faithful butler put his bottle of port on the table, and made the customary inquiries about master's health, hoped master was not fatigued by the journey, had enjoyed his cutlet, and so on. The old gentleman was left alone, his hand was on the neck of the bottle of port, when it suddenly flashed across his mind, "Here I am, a lonely old man; no one cares for me; there is no one near to help me if anything should happen to me. What if my old servant and his wife have been cheating and robbing me all the time? What if they want to get rid of me, and have poisoned this bottle of wine?" The idea took hold of him so strongly that he could not touch his port. When the man came in again he said he did not feel well, would have a cup of tea; no, he would have a glass of water and go to bed. In the morning he rang his bell, and no one answered. He got up, found his way downstairs; the house was empty, his two faithful old servants had vanished. And when he came to look further he found that his cellar, which ought to have contained two or three thousand pounds worth of wine, was empty, and the bottle they had brought him last night *was* poisoned.

I have told the story at length because it has not appeared in print before, and because it seems to answer all our requirements. The only place in which you can find a flaw is one which after all does not affect the whole. It is this :—Did the butler, in putting the wine on the table, betray the slightest discomposure? If he did there might be good cause for the suspicions of master being aroused. But if master suspected a servant of twenty-seven years' standing, is it not likely that he would have remarked it openly? A look, a tone, a sign of trepidation or uneasiness, would hardly have suggested such a train of reflections. There is also a remarkable accuracy about the train of reflections which leads one to a preternatural cause. Granting that suspicion was aroused, the solution arrived at was neither the easiest nor the most likely. The singular thing is that the master should have yielded so readily to the impression, and that it should afterwards have proved accurate in the most minute details.

Another point in this story is remarkable. It so seldom happens that presentiments of any kind are acted upon that Wallenstein may well deny

them the name of warnings. Yet when, as in this case, they have been acted upon, it is shown that they do not merely predict the inevitable. In the case of Wallenstein, indeed, we see no possibility of escape. But was there none in that of Henry the Fourth? Sometimes a presentiment seems to warn a man of an impending fate, in order to lead him to a better course of life; the death or calamity does not come, but it leads him to life and fortune. Or when something strange and unlikely is about to happen, the man is enabled to avoid it by a warning which points to something probable. There are curious examples of both these rules in the life of William Wilberforce. To take the latter first, he relates that he was once reading on a camp-stool, close to the brink of a river. Something whispered to him that he might be overcome by drowsiness while reading, might fall off the camp-stool, and tumble into the water. Obeying the warning, he moved the camp-stool away. He had scarcely sat on it five minutes longer when it broke suddenly, and he fell flat on the grass, as if he had been shot. If this had happened by the river side he must have been drowned. But if anything had whispered to him that the camp-stool might break, it is a question if he would have heeded the suggestion. Again, we find him writing in his diary for 1817: "Let me put down that I have had of late a greater degree of religious feeling than usual. Is it an omen, as has once or twice shot across my imagination, a hint that my time for being called away draws nigh?" It was not; his life had sixteen years longer to run. But was it not a gain to a man of ardent religious feeling to have it in a greater degree than usual, even though it foreboded nothing? Some men shrink from an access of such feeling, because they think it forebodes death. Others again refuse to talk of their childhood, because it is "unlucky." But if such feelings forebode death, it is hopeless to escape death by stifling them. If a presentiment warns you of anything, you do not escape it by refusing to listen to the presentiment; on the contrary, you make it inevitable.

This, I think, is the moral of the presentiments given us by Shakspeare. In all that he gives us, the warning is neglected and the fate comes. The simplest of them all is Hamlet's, and it is the strongest proof of Shakspeare's belief in them.

Hamlet. Thou would'st not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Horatio. Nay, good my lord—

Hamlet. It is but foolery; but it is a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Horatio. If your mind dislike anything, obey it; I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Hamlet. Not a whit, we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now 'tis not to come; if it be not to come it will be now; if it be not now yet it will come; the readiness is all.

At first we might think Hamlet's feeling was natural. He had detected the king's villany, and he knew his own counterplot would not long be

secret. But it is plain that he suspected nothing in the challenge to fence with Laertes. He never once examined the foils, or measured them, but picked up the first that came to hand, and took the length on trust. Just before, when Horatio warned him, he had said, "The interim is mine," and he clearly looked forward to having things his own way till the next news from England. Desdemona's presentiment does not bear the same tests. She had no reason to apprehend a violent death, but she had enough to apprehend from Othello's anger. He had struck her, and called her the vilest names. To her assurances of innocence he had answered by taunts when they were alone, and by coldness in public. Coming from a man she loved, these unkindnesses would have the utmost effect on a woman, and would throw her into a deep state of depression. "A sort of gain-giving" would naturally trouble her, and exclude every chance of real presentiment.

Undoubtedly the most curious cases in Shakspeare are those of Romeo and Hastings. And what makes them so curious is that any man desirous of overthrowing Shakspeare's belief in presentiments would naturally appeal to them. Hastings has just been dwelling on the smoothness and cheerfulness of Gloster, and inferring from Gloster's openness and sincerity that he is offended with no man there, when Gloster sends him to execution. Romeo has just said,

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.
My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne ;
And all this day an unaccustomed spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.

The next moment his servant returns with news of Juliet's death. From these two cases an opponent of presentiments would argue that Shakspeare was on his side. He evidently believed that an unusually joyful mood was the forerunner of disaster. The Scotch consider that a man in very high spirits is on the brink of a calamity, as the servants in *Guy Mannering* said the gauger was *fey*. Wordsworth says that when our minds have mounted as far as they can in delight, it sometimes chanceth that without any apparent cause they sink equally low in dejection. Shakspeare supports both these theories. Now if we look a little closer into the matter, we shall find that the presentiments which seem to deceive are even more genuine in reality than those which are most simple and straightforward. Hastings's presentiment was not the favourable view he took of Gloster's mood ; though he persuaded himself into thinking that it was. His real presentiments, as we learn afterwards, were unfavourable, but he would not listen to them. He had made up his mind that all must go well, and, in consequence, he neglected every sign that bore against his view, and dwelt too strongly on whatever seemed to support it. Presentiments being involuntary and unaccountable moods of the mind, it is utterly impossible for what you observe in another man's bearing to inspire you with such a feeling. You may distrust him involuntarily, or

not be able to account for your distrust; but at the best your feeling is instinctive. And this was not the feeling of Hastings, for he was able to explain his confidence in Gloster. Instead of yielding to impressions, whose source he could not divine, but which were too strong for him, he reasoned himself into other impressions, and found his mistake too late. Romeo's presentiment is of another character, but is even stronger. If he had known the truth he had the best reason to be cheerful. By feigning death Juliet had freed herself from restraint, and had sent a message to him that he might bear her away. How was the presentiment to know that her message would miscarry, that Romeo would hear another account, and act without waiting? Had he but trusted to the presentiment, instead of his own rash judgment, his tragedy would not have had a tragic ending. As it was, the presentiment did all in its power. It warned him of something good, and he refused to believe it. But it was because he refused to believe the good that evil came on him, because he thought himself deceived that he insisted on deceiving himself. You cannot blame your guide for misleading you, if you will not follow his guidance.

Notably enough none of the characters in Shakspeare do follow that guidance. They did not believe in presentiments as their creator did. After all, the question of obedience to such warnings would seem to be decided by considerations quite apart from their genuineness. In the story I have told the only trial of the old gentleman's faith was a bottle of port, and he made the sacrifice of it. But when a man runs the risk of being ridiculous in the eyes of the world, of seeming a prey to idle fears, of breaking up the senate till another time when Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams, he flinches from the ordeal. And thus, as preachers are always telling us, the world is too much for us. We listen to the supernatural voice so long only as the natural voice is silent. To a great extent this is true; but I hope I have shown in this paper that we have some justification. We cannot safely be guided by presentiments till we have the means of knowing when they are genuine. And this we cannot know. But we can do something towards knowing it, and by means of that we may steer our course between the dangers of blind subservience and blind mistrust. We can examine our reasons for any feeling, and when we can find no cause, or shadow of a cause, for joy or sorrow, we may conclude that something unseen moves us. Whether we obey it or not is another question.

Naval Men.

It would be a considerable gain to the study of social philosophy if we could get accurate descriptions of the different types of character formed by our professional divisions and their subdivisions. Some years ago there was an attempt of the kind in our light literature; but the books to which it gave rise were generally mere imitations of the French *physiologies*; written by comedians, who only aimed at being funny, and whose experience had not been such as to make them acquainted with the more important forms of English professional life. More recently, the clergyman, the Cantab, and other varieties of our countrymen as modified by our peculiar institutions, have found analysts and exponents; and an apology is hardly required from anybody who endeavours to add to the list. The *permanence* of professional types is by itself too curious a fact not to make the whole subject interesting; especially when we remember that it exists in defiance, as it were, of the general law which is making all society more similar and uniform. Commodore Trunnion is gone, and Parson Trulliber is gone. But the representatives of Trunnion and Trulliber are little more like each other than their respective ancestors were. Admiral Napier or Admiral Boxer hardly resembled Bishop Blomfield or Bishop Murray more than Benbow did Compton, or Hawke Hurd. The tendency of events is of course to reduce even such extreme dissimilarities as these; but the slowness of the process shows very markedly the tenacity of tradition, the force of education and habit, the power of special occupation, and the strength generally of all those influences which go to developing distinct species of characters out of people of the same race and the same class.

What makes our naval men a good subject even for the humblest social philosopher, is that they form so marked a type,—from the peculiar isolation of their employment, and the altogether unique way in which they are trained up. They are bred *in* their profession, while other people are bred *for* theirs. The soldier, the parson, the barrister, are men before they begin to be acted on by their special pursuits; but the naval man enters as a youngster, and is moulded while his clay is still very soft. He is not prepared for his work by a school, but the work itself is his school. This primary fact at once gives naval men a very distinctive shape of their own, and explains the resemblance which runs through the whole body. They are like nobody else, and they are very like each other. If a swell is an admiral, he is generally more admiral than swell. There are few such glaring differences in the navy as between the old school rector and the literate, the judge who has begun as a bagman

and the judge who was the crack boy at Eton. Differences there are, no doubt, but not so marked as the general difference between naval men and non-naval men. And this last observation applies to the case of mercantile officers as well as of landmen. The navy is so special and self-contained a pursuit, that the fact that mercantile officers also spend their lives at sea does not go nearly so far as might be presumed to make the two classes resemble each other or sympathize with each other. The Royal Naval Reserve is an excellent institution, but only a minority of officers of the merchant service care about belonging to it. They do not complain of naval men,—they will tell you that they always find them courteous. But the two services have different moral atmospheres. When all is said and done, the one is a service of honour and the other of gain. The one position is based on authority, the other only on contract. The mutual relations between superior and inferior are fixed in the navy by a force of custom too strong for any tyrant to overthrow; in merchant ships they are regulated by the skipper's good will. A "midshipman" of the latter may be called "a young gentleman," and it is the fashion in large merchant ships to ape naval phrases and naval uniform; but for all that, he can be made to do dirty work at the skipper's pleasure, and he misses a hundred influences which are brought to bear upon a naval youngster by his messmates and superiors from cultivated and polite English homes. All this ought to be allowed for by those who accuse naval men of discouraging an addition to their ranks from the Reserve; and it ought to warn innovators that where a special type has once formed itself for a special purpose, it is best not to interfere with its organization rashly. The naval man is good; the mercantile man is good; but a mixture of the two would not necessarily be as good as either.

Having thus illustrated the peculiarities and definiteness of the naval man, let us inquire more closely how he is formed. With regard to the materials, they are much the same as in the other leading professions. The Navy has never been considered quite so aristocratic a profession as the Army, and perhaps it has never been so in the vulgar sense of that much abused word. The majority of our great admirals have been of gentle families, and there are always some of the noblest British names in the Navy List: as witness those of Percy, Somerville, Berkeley, Seymour, Cochrane, Napier, and so forth, in our own day. But on the other hand, the navy is not a profession into which titled men and rich men go for a few years to spend money, as the army is. If from this fact it loses a certain splendour, it also escapes the ridiculous scandals which have attended particular regiments—hussar regiments, for instance, the names of which will occur to everybody—in the present generation. So too, if it misses the magnificent Earl of De Rhino, who might possibly gild the lower masts at his own expense, it is also saved from young Gherkin the Plunger, who would still more probably ruin the ward-room mess at blind hookey. It is a younger son's, a poor gentleman's, pro-

profession, more than the army is ; and this accounts for the undoubted fact that, especially in garrison towns, military men have somewhat "the pull" over naval men in the eyes of the fair. The purchase system in the army stamps money with a seal of superiority which nothing can dispute ; and this again conspires with the other advantages of the soldier to make him more frequently a fortune-hunter and pursuer of heiresses than the sailor. Our nautical friend, however, has wonderfully come up with his rival of the sister service in the showy and polite social arts during the present century. There is a curious passage of Byron's about the two professions. Talking of Fielding's remark on the "natural air of gentility" with which some men are born, he says that one often sees it in military and seldom in naval men. All who remember the old school will know what Byron,—who, by the way, was never so happy as when afloat,—meant. But now-a-days no such difference is visible, while it is the proud boast in some of "Her Majesty's ships and vessels of war" (among Q.H.B.s—Queen's Hard Bargains,—chiefly, we fear,) that they rival any regiment in riding, waltzing, shooting, billiards, or other liberal accomplishments. When you get hold of a naval man, who to the old frankness and cordiality of the service adds the refinement and culture of a modern age, you find him all that an English gentleman needs to be. Meanwhile it is that same *old* frankness and cordiality which still makes his best charm, and which, while it mixes delightfully with the more modern elements, is at least as precious as they. A strong manly simplicity of nature, a free grace of movement, a shyness which is not *gauche*, a homeliness which is not raw,—these are the distinctive characteristics of the naval man. There are great gentlemen and great snobs in both army and navy : there are wise men and fools in both. But there is a particular kind of fool which the army breeds in larger numbers than the navy, and we specify him because he illustrates the difference of the soils. We mean the affected, lisping, and haw-haw fool ; and we explain his great rarity in the navy by the fact that, being caught so very young, his ears are clipped before they have time to grow.

This happy result is due to that most important fact already referred to,—the early age at which youngsters begin naval life. They enter, not as young men, though they are officially called "the young gentlemen," but as boys,—boys of thirteen or fourteen, who only yesterday were dining in the nursery, and who never were masters of more than a sovereign at a time up to the period of their undertaking to defend the commerce and independence of Great Britain. The midshipman's mess, accordingly, is a kind of public school, governed by a rough public opinion of its own, which shows no mercy to affectation or humbug, and has not much tenderness even for gentle and harmless forms of weakness or oddity. A bore is laughed at, a sneak is cut, and a very obtrusive bore or sneak runs the risk of being "cobbed,"—a punishment inflicted with a sword-scabard on the part marked out by nature and history for the purpose. This kind of thing knocks the priggishness out of a fellow early. And the

duties of his daily life are favourable to his development in a natural way. He has to command a boat. He has to command a top. He is every now and then called upon for the exercise of an independent judgment. Is there too much wind to take the cutter off to the ship, and shall he wait till it moderates? Can the men, or any of them, be trusted to leave the landing-place, without getting themselves drunk, and their young commander into a scrape? Thus he learns to command while he is learning to obey. He has much freedom and yet he is under strict control; while the very nature of his work,—performed aloft—in boats—at all hours of the day and night—in the open air, during all weathers—in constant contact with the rough side of life,—makes an off-hand, free-spoken, decisive, and yet mobile man of him. A special essay might be written on the navy as a public school; and indeed a parent might do worse than send his son into the service for a few years as a preparation for any walk in life whatever. The lad need not lose by it, even in a literary point of view, were the resources of his position wisely used,—a *desideratum* still in the majority of cases, we regret to say. It is true, unfortunately, as has been said, that “a want of general culture is the weak point of naval men.” And here the army has the advantage; for if the average military man be no better in such respects than his naval brother, still far more soldiers than sailors have written good books. Nay, the sailors have allowed themselves to be beaten in the literature of their own walk. The *Naval History* of James is more satisfactory than that of Brenton, though Brenton is always taunting James (a little shabbily) with his want of a naval education. For the best life of Nelson and the Correspondence of Collingwood we have to go to civilians. Rodney found his biographer in a soldier, Major-General Mundy; Howe in an Admiralty official, Sir John Barrow. Even the best novel of Marryatt’s is not better than *Tom Cringle’s Log*, the work of a Scotch West Indian merchant; and naval gunnery owes more to the labours of General Sir Howard Douglas than to any naval man. The new system of training ships will probably increase the culture of the profession. The late Captain Harris of the *Britannia*, an excellent officer, not very well treated by the authorities, told us that he received good accounts of the *Britannia*’s youngsters from captains, and they can hardly help having much more knowledge than the youngsters of twenty years ago. But training ships apart, there are far more facilities for reading on board a man-of-war than an outsider can readily understand. The naval instructor is always an educated man, and sometimes a classical scholar; and surely the passage from station to station, amidst the scenes of all that is great in history and curious in nature, amidst all varieties of language and costumes, ought to rouse intellectual curiosity and act as a pungent whet to the appetite of the mind. In this respect, however, there is a progressive improvement going on, and a naval officer is at this moment a professor at Oxford. By-and-by, the “mid” will remember that old Blake himself read his Horace,—in which, as in his gallantry, Broke of the *Shannon*

followed him. He will enjoy his mulberries at Syracuse all the more for recalling the Eclogue in which Silenus is pelted with them by the nymphs. Nor will he less relish the *bécasses* at the *Hôtel d'Orient* at Athens, if they are to be followed by a stroll during which he may fancy he hears the nightingale of Sophocles singing amidst the ruins. The modern elegance and luxury of the service demand this crowning grace. "I have no objection," said Lord Chesterfield, "to our youth being *bound and gilt*. I only wish that they should also be *lettered*."

These hints upon the culture suggest a few words upon the politics of naval men. In a large sense, the navy, from the days of the Civil War downwards, has been more national than political in feeling altogether. During the Civil War it acted with the Parliament, not from hatred to monarchy, or even dislike of Charles, so much as because if it had gone for Charles, it must have been employed in transporting foreign troops into the kingdom. Nevertheless, it has had its Whigs and Tories, like other professions; and its eminent men have been divided between the parties pretty fairly, as elsewhere. Just as Fielding was a Whig and Smollett a Tory, Burke a Whig and Johnson a Tory, so the Whigs may claim Keppel and the Tories Rodney; the Whigs Jervis and the Tories Howe. When the great Revolutionary War came off, a hatred of the French constituted the simple politics of the bulk of the service, and in the quieter times which succeeded men called themselves Whigs or Tories according as their family "interest" lay on one side or the other. But there is a kind of naval politics proper,—a mixture compounded of nautical experience, aristocratic sympathy, and radical grumbling,—which is *sui generis*, and which, if it ever came to be professed at a contested election might well take for its colours, "navy blue." The naval politician of this favourite pattern is for keeping the populace in order, just as he is for keeping the lower deck in order, and because subordination is one of the elements in which he lives. He is a gentleman, and he likes to serve with gentlemen. But to hear him talk of the Admiralty you would think that he was ripe for revolution; and he drops caustic observations on "lords" generally, the tendency of which is in the same direction. These are the men who complain that "fellows with handles to their names" came afloat after the great war, and were promoted and employed over the heads of their betters. They can track the prosperous Elliott from ship to ship, and detail the jobs by which he has advanced, one after the other. They have capital stories of little Lord Fitz-Nelly, who was, indeed, as near an idiot as a man can be out of an asylum; and they will tell you, with much scornful emphasis, "Ah, they don't send Fitz-Nelly to 'the Coast,' sir, like poor Jack Tompion, who was there for five years on a stretch, and drowned himself the other day; brain touched, sir; brain touched!" Or they will relate how Booring, a nephew of the admiral in command of the Mediterranean, "had the pick of the station—the pick of the station! Always at Corfu, when we were broiling at Beyrout; or shooting red-legs about the islands, when

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we were at Tunis! And the old screw, his uncle, saves half his table-money, and gives you stuff to drink only fit to send down the scuppers." If the speaker is a very violent specimen of the more "radical" side of the class, he has perhaps encounters to narrate with the authorities at Whitehall, which must be taken *cum grano*. "'Admiral Bilboes,' I said, 'don't bully me.' And by Jove, sir, he turned white!" Yet when retired on half-pay on the Kentish coast or elsewhere, these ferocious declaimers become rather Conservative than otherwise. With that fine adaptability to new conditions which is one of the strong points of sailors,—so that a sailor is much more useful ashore than a landsman is afloat,—they love to dabble in local business, and are generally found, we think, on the side of authority against refractory vestrymen and recalcitrant town councillors. But this is rather from the old instinct of discipline than from any fixed principle. The fussy retired naval man is very crotchety and touchy. If he considers himself injured he displays his noble wrath pretty freely; for it is one of his characteristics that whatever he does he does heartily. We remember a retired commander who had a scheme for working the silver mines in a West Indian island governed by a negro potentate. After expounding his plan with great fervour, he would add:—"And ultimately, sir, I shall depose that black rascal,—depose him!"

Such men as those just sketched are of course the more eccentric specimens of the class, and their politics are coloured by their eccentricity. There are shrewd, long-headed naval men who turn things to better account; and by professing to have no politics at all contrive to get commands, or places on the Board, from the most opposite administrations. It is rare to see an actual M. P. afloat; but cases happen, and the position may be variously turned to account. When Sniffin Kraggles, M.P., had the *Pylades*, he gave berths aboard her to sundry voters and sons of voters in Potborough,—an easier place to distinguish yourself at than Sebastopol. Kraggles used to practise oratory on his crew and officers; and, indeed, it would not have been easy to find a harder punishment for anybody who had misbehaved than compelling him to listen to one of Kraggles's speeches. On the whole, there is less political jobbery in naval appointments now than there was twenty years ago, when a judicious ratting at an election was a safe card to play for a command; when some officers who were always half mad, and some who were always more than half drunk, had ships under them; when Admiral Methuselah was in charge of the Channel fleet, and Admiral Priam of the Pacific,—before the European stagnation was broken up by the revolution of 1848, with its long train of war, political disquiet, naval and military changes, and naval and military expenditure.

While there is a family resemblance, naturally enough, running through naval men, from midshipman to admiral—as there is among parsons, from curate to bishop—each rank has its special character, and demands a separate mention in a paper of this kind. One can hardly imagine a more

honoured position, or a title with associations at once more dignified and more popular, than that of a British admiral. A bishop is an imposing figure, but there is a large body of Dissenters who don't believe in him; and sometimes you will hear him sneered at as an ex-schoolmaster, or sneered at from another point of view as deficient in Greek. A general is a great man, but somehow our generals have never been familiar in popular legend, poetry, and anecdote, to the public mind, like our admirals; about whom too there is a vague, humorous association which the word "general" does not call up. There was in fact a curious homeliness—all the more effective because of its being combined with stateliness—in the real old admiral of the old breed. Lord St. Vincent, on coming down to breakfast, would say,—“Well, I have got on my blue breeches this cold morning; Lord Howe wore blue breeches, and I love to follow his example, even in my dress!” Of Howe, we are told that, when Bowen, his master, in the *Queen Charlotte*, kept constantly calling him “my lord,” he said,—“Bowen, pray, my good fellow, do give over that eternal my lord, my lord; don't you know I am called *Black Dick* in the fleet?”—*Black Dick* being his name among the men, as “Jarvey” was that of his friend St. Vincent. When Nelson, after lunching at Lord Sidmouth's, wanted his phaeton, he asked one of the family to “man the boat.” And it is well known that Collingwood never dined without pea-soup with pieces of salt pork in it, *more nautico*; that he thought brown sugar quite good enough for any gentleman, and regarded an indulgence in white as a sign of a wasteful and careless disposition, boding no good to a young man's professional future. In the eyes of those old gentlemen the service and its traditions were invested with an awful reverence, both as regarded small things and great. For instance, they thought the use of “R.N.” after a naval man's name an undignified innovation, and disapproved the substitution of “port” for “larboard”—both now so firmly established that few people know anything of a time when they were new. What was simplicity and geniality, however, in the finer natures among these veterans, was often brutal rudeness among men of coarser fibre. We talk of “the old school,” but there were two “old schools:” one which was quaint and eccentric, certainly, according to our present standards, but humane, dignified, and well-bred; the other, which had a strong dash of vulgar ruffianism and cruelty about it. For instance, neither Nelson nor Collingwood flogged so much as we have known many an undistinguished numskull do in times of perfect peace. Nor did they indulge in that habitual use of what the Articles of War used to call “profane oaths, cursings, and execrations,” which was also fashionable in the second-best old school. So late as the Crimean war, there was a naval potentate employed whose talk was a perfect *sandwich* of oaths and orders. “Do you think, sir, d—n you, sir, that you are to be allowed, b—t you, sir!”—such was the old gentleman's regular way, though a good officer enough otherwise. Others of that race were of milder type, but thought the barbarism of the ancient service part of its essential merit, which

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ought to be artificially preserved. There was not a little of this feeling about the late Sir Charles Napier, a brave man, and in many respects a capital officer, but whose popularity in the country was as much owing to his demagogic as his professional talent. He had a real naval element in him, but to this was added an infusion of what we may call the T. P. Cooke element,—a love of *acting* the British tar as well as *being* it, quite inconsistent with the grand simplicity and reality of the Collingwoods and Howes. He courted popularity among the men at the expense of the officers, talked clap-trap, and bragged; and after the close of the Syrian war in 1840 hurried home to claim all the laurels over the head of Admiral Stopford, in a way which was not admired on the Mediterranean station. Napier, for instance, thought it fine for his ship to be in want of a coat of paint,—a luxury which would have much improved the appearance of the *Galatea* and the *Powerful*. Yet painting would not have spoiled the gunnery of those vessels, on which he justly prided himself; nor would the commodore's own person have been damaged by a little more of that external care which people desiderated in the *Powerful* and the *Galatea*. *Est modus in rebus*, and there is no need for a man to become a boor in order to avoid being a fogey.

There is no doubt that fogies were very rife in high commands at the time of which we have just been speaking. The list had got so crammed, that promotion being dependent in the upper ranks on seniority, nobody who had not been prodigiously pushed forward in his youth by interest had any chance of hoisting his flag before old age. So a curious batch of survivors of the old days were commanding our squadrons—toothless and shaky old gentlemen, out of all harmony with the modern generations under them. The representatives of this race are “retired” now, for ever and a day—laid up at Cheltenham and Bath, in the suburbs of seaports, in quiet coast towns where they lead very tranquil lives, watching the weather, and reading the “naval intelligence” from old habit, but having an ever-increasing sense of the strangeness of all things naval in our day. It is calculated now, that if a naval officer is five years consecutively ashore he is of very little use afloat after it; so rapidly do the changes of the modern service follow each other. We never see in the obituaries such an entry as the following,—“At his residence, Stonehouse, on the —th inst. Rear-Admiral Keeper Luff in his eightieth year,” without a feeling of regret for the good stories, and picturesque touches about the old service, which perish with him, and which he never told to anybody who could make them of use to the world. But men are on the retired list,—are “yellow admirals,”—who are still not much past middle life, but who disliking steam and all its associations, have kept clear of it; have been refused sailing commands in consequence, and have now settled under the “sere and yellow flag,” for life. The admiral in favour just now is not the veteran,—the man who had been a youngster under Howe and Jervis—of some years back, but a modern and more active man, who has never seen any fighting, indeed, and who has little that is

picturesque or remarkable about him, but who is at home in the profession of to-day—an indispensable quality, as times now are. But then the modern profession has been so drawn into connections and relations of all kinds with other forms of modern life, that the pungent and piquant attributes of the old admirals are not to be expected in their present representatives. The modern admiral wherever he goes, employed or unemployed, lives very much ashore; and gets on, not by being a great warrior or seaman, but by being a shrewd man of the world, whose discretion can be perfectly relied upon even under provocation. The character of our present foreign policy requires such admirals, and useful and respectable they are. In an emergency, they would no doubt do their best, and their best would probably be fair enough. But they do not stand out in society with the vivid stamp, the sharply defined edge of the antique men. They are intelligent, reserved English gentlemen, with a naval tinge about them to be recognized by competent observers, but that is all. If the tendency of the old service was to carry the nautical character about with it wherever it went, the tendency of the new service is rather the other way. The world without acts upon it too strongly for its originality, and it reflects afloat after its own fashion, the tastes, opinions, and crotchets of that "shore-going world" which to the ancient men was quite a distinct sphere of life. Thus there are officers who take up philanthropic and reformatory schemes; admirals who try to put down smoking and who inflict new-fangled punishments; and captains who turn their vessels into schools.

This last was the ideal project of Captain Sawbury of the *Antigone*, a frigate which was on the Mediterranean station some years ago. Sawbury was a philosopher, and did everything for some very fine reason. If he detached a youngster in a boat it was "to encourage his self-reliance;" if he sentenced him to walk the poop till sunset, it was "to awaken reflection in him." "This age, sir," Sawbury would say if you met him at dinner, "is characterized by the spread of education!" The *Antigone*, he would add, was a ship, but she was also a school; and he was prouder in his capacity of a teacher, (if he might so venture to describe himself,) than in his capacity of a captain. So Sawbury set about turning that fine old-fashioned thing, a British man-of-war, into something between a utilitarian school and a model prison. When he heard one of the men chanting such a good old-fashioned stave during the first watch as the following:—

She sang like a linnet, and she looked like a dove,
And the song that she sang was concerning of her love;—

poor Sawbury would give an impatient "pish." "Dear me," you might hear him observe, "what nonsense these poor fellows do delight in! 'Concerning of her love;' why one would think there wasn't a grammar in the ship!" Visiting the *Antigone* you would find different offenders against discipline undergoing some of the captain's "philosophical" modes of punishment. Buggins, A.B., would be walking the gangway with a label on him marked "drunkard." Pool would be emptying water from

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one bucket into another;—monotonous but appropriate,—Pool having flung a bucket of water over his brother of the afterguard, Pippin. Jones would be employed on an arithmetical table. This was all ingenious enough, no doubt. But, somehow, the men thought it childish, and it kept away several hands from work. Besides, the men soon smoked the good-natured pedant, and played on his weak point. A sturdy main-top-man might be seen accosting him bashfully on the quarter-deck: "I axes your pardon, sir" (touching his hat), "but Bill Ragget here, and I, has had a bit of a dispoot, which we submits to you." (Sawbury smiles encouragingly). "If you please, sir, what is a gladi-hater?—a kind on a beast, sir?" It was delightful to hear Captain Sawbury explaining pompously the position and functions of a gladiator to Jack Timbs; after which operation the captain walked away rubbing his hands, and muttering to himself: "Love of knowledge! love of knowledge! The master-passion of man!"

When Sawbury heard his first lieutenant in a fit of rage call a man "a son of a —," his rebuke was at once dignified and intellectual. "I cannot approve such language, Mr. Dodger," he said. "Most unphilosophical! The epithet, sir, involves a physiological anomaly to begin with; and besides, it is the language, not of the reason, but of the passions." The captain's own style of blowing up the men was refined and polite. "Foretop there," you would hear him begin; "Mr. Adair, is that man asleep or only lazy, at the end of the yard? . . . Come, come, Pooter, don't exert yourself too much, or you may do yourself an injury! How's the foretopsail yard, Mr. Peverell? Lee brace, did you say? Now, my lads, the brace won't bite you; pull at it like men." This, the reader sees, was the finest irony, and far removed from anything vulgar or low. But, meanwhile, his first lieutenant, Dodger, was filled with delight at the notion that Sawbury's "dry way of abusing of them," as the men used to call it, was much more hated by them than his own antique professional Billingsgate. "The old bore," Dodger would say to the second lieutenant in confidence, "what does *he* know of the service? The men would rather have a hearty d—n any day! Why, they like it!" If they *did* like it, it must be admitted that Mr. Dodger often enough favoured them with the luxury.

How different Captain Sawbury from the sentimental Lord Heartsease of the *Ismene*, who had a piano on board, and kept gazelles; poetic creatures, no doubt, but dirty in a domestic point of view. But if Heartsease thought Sawbury a prig, old Browser of the *Porpus* thought Heartsease a spoon. Gazelles indeed! Browser kept a couple of good pointers instead, and has been known to make believe to have sprung his foreyard just to have a pretext for running into Lemnos, and having a bang at the red-legs. All these, meanwhile, from different points of view, concurred in despising old Gunne of the *Orson*, who carried his wife about with him everywhere, (being a relation of the commander-in-chief's,) and who invited his brother officers on board to tea and buns.

These various oddities, however,—fogies, pedants, or what not,—are gradually disappearing into retirement, as a grimmer and graver kind of captain becomes necessary in the progress of events. A First Lord of the Admiralty has been known to open the Navy List and beg some distinguished officer to point out a good man for a ship,—endeavouring to guide himself solely by the public opinion of the service. In these days of iron-clads, the risk from a noodle is prodigious, the stake being so costly and vast. Then gunnery is more elaborate,—by the difference of a whole revolution; steam opens up a new world of its own; and electricity is employed in carrying orders to and fro the mighty bulk of our marine monsters. In our larger iron-clads there are two commanders besides the captain, and a new type of captain is in course of formation; quite distinct from the sea-captain of other days. Men still in the prime of life can recollect captains afloat who had been at Trafalgar. There were such in the Mediterranean Fleet during the Syrian War of 1840. They were not in much sympathy with the new generation, but at least they were at home in a ship and in sea-life. There were none but paddle-steamers then; even the screw was a novelty, and to add a screw to a sailing vessel was a thing as yet unknown. The commander of a steamer then was at the mercy of his chief engineer, whose art was as much a mystery as the arts of the middle ages. Now-a-days, all has changed, and every change has gone to make seamanship proper less prominent than it used to be. The typical captain of the new state of things has as yet to take his permanent shape. He is in the course of his development into a new species; being a quite different animal from the old bluff-mannered, free-spoken, weather-beaten man of Stopford and Napier's generation. The service is, so to speak, in rather a chaotic state at present,—passing into the condition of a new world, but a world whose denizens cannot be described in advance. Formerly, there was a certain definite sort of character belonging to all captains, in spite of the racy individualism of each, and in spite of the fact that every great admiral formed a school of captains of his own. *That* particular feature of the service, by the way, has quite gone by,—that modelling of different sets of officers upon different leaders, so that there were schools of heroism and seamanship as there are of poetry and painting. But later still, the family likeness common to all captains has waned away, and the new common visage (as already hinted) is as yet unrecognizable. The strictly modern captain has a dash of the artilleryman and engineer officer in him, and wants the nautical freshness and pungency which we can remember (sometimes in ludicrous, sometimes in serious shapes) among his predecessors. He is a sharp active man, with far more scientific knowledge than they, but (as yet) with less flavour of character and individuality about him. Like the admiral as distinct from the historic admiral, he is much more a man of the world, and in much more familiar connection with modern ideas, than the captains he was bred under. Culture, as we have said, was never the strong point of the navy, though

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Collingwood, who was the model of a naval gentleman, wrote a better style than nine-tenths of our professed authors. But the captain's cabin has always a modern library at all events, containing some of the best English authors, and the fashionable histories, poems, and novels of the day; and to this library, if the captain be a good fellow, with a sense of the responsibilities of his position, the youngsters are allowed access. In summer time, the captain's suite of cabins in a large ship makes a very pleasant residence even for ladies, and where the position admits of it, as in vessels employed in harbour at home, you will find the domestic life there as elegant on a modest scale as that of a villa. There are pianos, pictures, flowers, and pleasant nicknacks, while the sea breeze stirs the silk curtains of the ports, and cools the atmosphere more delightfully than any air from meadow or hill. A cockney who had taken his notions of existing naval society from the novels of Marryatt and Chamier, and who supposes that the evening winds up on board with one of Dibdin's songs and a "can of flip," would be surprised to find how much a dinner in this agreeable region resembled a dinner at Richmond or in London. The naval man of these days, ceasing to be "the salt" of other times, has rather a tendency to run into the other extreme, and to be a chilly and polished swell. Edmond About has observed the same thing of the officers of the French marine. The French navy is, indeed, more in favour with good families in France than the army; and good American families, we believe, show the same predilection for their service.

We need hardly dwell specially on the next grade to captain, that of commander, for they resemble each other in all essentials, at least the active portion of the ranks do. The commander in active employment, whether under the captain in a large vessel, or in charge for himself in a small craft, is a child of the new age, or would be useless afloat. But the retired list of commanders comprises many men of the oldest surviving school; for it is the rank at which the great "block" in the road of promotion begins, and into which old lieutenants retire when the Admiralty grow ashamed of keeping them in the lieutenants' list any longer. There were lieutenants living the other day who had been at the battle of the Nile; lieutenants of fifty or sixty years' standing, who had been afloat long before some of our admirals were born. Every one of these ill-used old fogies planted at a seaport was a standing "frightful example" of naval injustice; and the spectacle of his grey hairs and shabby coat did a certain definite amount of mischief every year, by pointing a moral in the eyes of the nautical population. He might sip his rum-and-water at the "Blue Pig" with a stoical resignation, and decline to allow his grievances to be discussed in his presence,—the proud old Englishman,—but his mere existence was enough to keep alive that sense of the injustice of our naval administration, which has done so much mischief, and which has more yet to do.

When Lord Dundonald joined the *Hind* frigate as a youngster, at Sheerness, on the 27th June, 1793, he found Jack Larmour, the first

lieutenant, working at "setting up rigging," with a marling-spike slung round his neck and a lump of grease in his hand. "This Lord Cochrane's chest?" exclaimed Jack, when he saw it. "Does Lord Cochrane think he is going to bring a cabin aboard? The service is going to the devil! Get it up on the main deck." Before many minutes were over the key of the chest was sent for, all the "traps" were turned out of it, and one end of it was sawed off. It was some time before Jack Larmour quite forgave Cochrane for being a lord,—not till he found him ready to put on the rig of a common seaman, and to work by his side. The first lieutenant now has an opinion on Carlotta Patti, and probably on *Ecce Homo*, and "grease," unless it be the best bear's-grease for very different purposes, he never touches. Yet the service has not gone to the devil, where (if the old school were right) it must be terribly over-due; and if Jack Larmour's successors are not so handy as he was with a marling-spike, they know a great deal more than he knew of other things that an officer ought to know. On the lieutenants of the navy the bulk of the regular work of the service falls; though from the anomalous nomenclature of naval rank the general public is perhaps hardly sensible of their importance. A lieutenant in the navy ranks with a captain in the army, but who remembers the fact except in circles where all that kind of thing is known as a matter of course? Men now become lieutenants early in life, a great number of them are in constant employment, and from both circumstances together the lieutenants are fair specimens at once of the latest standard and of the greatest variety afforded by the profession. There is the smart lieutenant, the spoony lieutenant, the swell lieutenant, the fast lieutenant, and so forth, each of whom would make an interesting photograph if carefully taken. The smart lieutenant is an active gentleman, with an eye darting on all sides of him successively, and a sharp metallic voice, who takes capital charge of a deck. Wherever he goes he is the born enemy of all disorder. He makes a rush where he sees anything wrong or out of its place, and yells for the proper functionary to put it right. He is impatient of all delay, exact as to time, merciless about dirt and slovenliness, and the peculiar terror of the young gentlemen and the boys. It is these gentlemen to whom our men-of-war owe their marvellous cleanness and neatness, that spick-and-span purity and order which (when the number of people on board is considered) astonishes a visitor more than anything else. The born smart lieutenant lives for the routine of the service. His ideal is to have everything "ship-shape," and he is haunted in dreams by the question what is the best rig for a pinnacle? The modern naval man of all conditions suppresses the "shop" very strictly on shore; but a smart lieutenant's eye wanders involuntarily round a drawing-room to see that everything is right, and he has a sudden secret impulse to summon the captain of the afterguard at intervals. The spoony lieutenant is a mild youth, who does his duty and no more—neither very well nor very ill—and whose heart is given over to tender associations. You find him reading the *Lady of Lyons* in his cabin,

where there is generally a portrait of a large-eyed young woman looking at him from a balcony, or reading a letter in apparel of great splendour. The diversity of female beauty which such a youth encounters in the course of a naval career, leaves him in a state of permanent perplexity; and he has never quite time enough to do more than acquire the rudiments of the gentle arts in each place. The *Sprout* is ordered from South America before he has mastered the guitar; she leaves Naples while he is labouring at the Italian verbs; so what between foreign countries and foreign grammars, the poor fellow is equally confused in heart and intellect, and not unfrequently he settles down on a British widow with money, who is proud to believe that in taking him she has broken the heart of a Savelli or an Ossuna. This kind of youth is sometimes known to his messmates by the endearing epithet of "Goosey" so-and-so; but his tenderness is genuine, and—a certain elongation of ear notwithstanding—he is an honourable man, who does his duty respectably. He sometimes writes verses, but this is rare—the composition of verses in her Majesty's service being considered a sure mark of a donkey. The swell lieutenant is a gentleman whom nature has gifted with an ornamental appearance, and fortune endowed with greater social advantages and more money than his neighbours. A combination of this sort makes him prominent in his vessel and in favour with the authorities, and he is expected to do the civil to grandees who are taking passages, and that kind of thing. One duty of our men-of-war is to act as yachts for precisely that class of persons who can best afford to pay their own travelling expenses. Thus, there was a charge for conveying little Lord Namby Pamberley from one port to another, in a corvette some years ago, and the country had the honour of helping him to a holiday out of the Civil Service estimates. It is on these occasions that the swell lieutenant makes himself useful, and acts as a buffer between the noble visitor and the vulgar world. The swell lieutenant is not unfrequently called "Count" so-and-so,—a favourite nickname among naval men for personages of imposing presence. He is great when a ball is to be given on board, or when foreign officers are to be entertained, though the obstinate preference of those confounded foreigners for their own languages sometimes places him at a disadvantage. He is often flag-lieutenant to the admiral, and is a general favourite with the very knowing old ladies who lead society in garrison and seaport towns, and who for knowing what kind of men to be civil to, may be backed against any old ladies in these islands. With regard to the fast lieutenant, he bears too general a resemblance to fast men everywhere, to require any particular notice. He is seen at billiard-rooms and at races, and has long ticks with livery-stable keepers, and is given to expensive drinks. He is subject to that fearful disorder known as "sun-stroke," which, owing to climatic exposure, falls so heavily on our brave defenders. The victim of this insidious disease is attacked at once in the legs and the articulation,—concomitant symptoms being a haziness of the eye, and a temporary loss of the reasoning powers. The patient will often

insist that he is "all right," but this is itself a part of the disorder, and he is immediately relieved from duty. After a few attacks of the kind, the sufferer appears before a medical board and is invalided home; nor does he often recover his health sufficiently to rise to much distinction in the service.

The combatants next in rank to the lieutenants—the masters—are now in course of abolition. It is their duty to take observations, keep the log, have charge of the rigging and stores, and so forth. But as they were always grumbling at their not being able to rise sufficiently high, a sagacious Admiralty resolved to terminate their discontent by terminating their existence. The change is disapproved by some of the best heads in the service; but from the Admiralty point of view that kind of objection does not matter. For our present purpose, it is more interesting to remark that there perishes in the master a *type* as purely and specially naval as any spoken of in this paper. The old boatswain was not more richly characteristic of the service than the old master. Lord Howe's master in the *Queen Charlotte*, Bowen, already referred to, was a noble specimen. On the 1st of June, just as the *Charlotte* was closing with the *Montagne*, Lord Howe called out to him to starboard the helm, on which Bowen remarked that if they did so she would fall aboard the *Jacobin*. "What's that to you, sir?" said the admiral sharply. Bowen, hit by this, was overheard by Howe to mutter: "D—n my eyes, if I care if *you* don't! I'll go near enough to singe some of our whiskers." Lord Howe turned to his captain and said: "That's a fine fellow, Curtis." Not long after the battle, a deputation of the men requested Bowen to ask Lord Howe if he would allow them to congratulate him on the result. When they came aft for the purpose, the old admiral (he was sixty-nine), with a faltering voice, and tears in his eyes, said: "No, no; I thank *you*; it is *you*, my lads, that have conquered." In telling this story the rough Bowen added, "I could have cried myself!" And, indeed, there was always more than one very soft place about those indomitably hard men. They were leonine, but they were lachrymose.

Perhaps as amusing an illustration of the difference between the old and new navies is afforded by a complaint which sometimes crops out, that chaplains are here and there given to ritualism! In Dibdin, the name of the chaplain is irrevocably associated with that of Betsy Bowser. Does he now take—when we supposed him long ago reformed—to the Scarlet Lady instead? The charge of ritualism puzzles us, for we don't see how the physical conditions admit of it. Are candles put on the capstan? Are buckets with capstan-bars across objected to as relics of the odious pew system? Does a lad come from the galley-fire with the incense? We are lost in such speculations; but if there be anything in the movement Mr. Whalley will certainly hold with those who affirm that "the service is going to the devil." The chaplain, however, is an influential man,—especially if he be also naval instructor into the bargain. He has one dread power in his hands. He can preach at anybody he does not like,

even the captain, just as the Scotch minister, or even the Scotch father of the family, can pray *at* anybody present. Few captains can stand this with equanimity, though we have heard of one old gentleman who made a point of snoring audibly during the most savage passages.

There is little novelty that we hear of in the position or peculiarities of the officers of marines. The old prejudice against military men has, we take it, entirely vanished from the navy; and if it existed, it would begin to look particularly ugly *now*, considering how much the army had to do compared with the navy in the last war. The medical branch is still grumbling, though their old standing grievance, the want of cabins for assistant-surgeons, has been long abolished. They certainly used to be ill-treated; but the temptation to "chaff" the raw hobbledehoy who came from the Scotch universities was one that midshipmen found irresistible. During late years, the navy has acquired an entirely new class of officers in the engineers. But they have not yet found their place among "naval men," and cannot be measured by the old standard or compared with the new. At present, they stand apart, and the fact that, the chief engineer excepted, they have a mess of their own, will long operate, unfortunately, as we think, to prevent them from getting amalgamated with the service.

Among other innovations, the Admiralty, some time ago, turned the "mates" into "sub-lieutenants," thus clinching the absurd arrangement of naval titles of rank by a formal act; since mates always ranked with lieutenants in the army, and "sub-lieutenant," if it means anything, means something inferior to lieutenant. This particular grade of officers is scantily supplied just now; for the step to lieutenant is gained early, and the "old mate," with his thorough seamanship and his surly temper and his red nose, is as extinct as Benbow. He was objected to, but he is missed; for rough as he was, he was greatly useful, and he went about his work with an indifference to its uglier features which impaired his refinement, no doubt, but which increased his serviceableness. The sub-lieutenant, for social and dramatic purposes, is simply a younger lieutenant, and falls into the same varieties of type. His class are at the head of the gun-room, or midshipman's berth, and it is their duty as "oldsters" to keep the "youngsters" in order. This is no sinecure; for the midshipman, who is a public school-boy *plus* a sailor, has a large infusion of both diabolic elements. Strada Reale at Malta, or the Common Hard at Portsmouth, is his playground, and "fields" are represented to him by the Troad, or the mountains of Jamaica, or the plains of Brazil. But with the boy is mingled early an infusion of the man. He is as much an officer in the eyes of the men as any other officer; gives his commands with a fine roaring consciousness of power; and when detached on duty in a boat, remembers that his dirk (an instrument of the greatest use in opening sardine cases) represents for a time the whole material force of Great Britain. Unfortunately, however, this is not the only side of affairs on which he shares the responsibilities of manhood. He is brought early

into contact with the dun; learns early the mystery of stamped paper; and finds himself ashore in towns where there is no very rigid standard of morality with money in his pocket and free access to hotels and places of amusement generally. That a certain proportion of lads should "come to grief" under these circumstances is inevitable, and most naval men could draw up a pretty long list of such cases among their own acquaintance. The *Britannia* training-ship is supposed to have been moved to Portland from Portsmouth, as much for the sake of the moral as of the physical health of the lads. But temptation follows a big vessel just as sharks do at sea, and will pursue the *Britannia* to Falmouth, if (as has been reported) she should be further moved on there. Indeed, if there is any *over-rigid* supervision of the youngsters while they are in the training-ship, the only result will be that they will break out with extra fervour when they are appointed to sea-going vessels. That the training-ship will have a marked effect on the standard of attainments in the navy may be fairly assumed. There is room for improvement beyond doubt, as the shakiness of our naval French at Cherbourg and Portsmouth last autumn too clearly proved; while, except in the surveying service, which is a peculiar branch, few naval men learn much about the places they visit except their superficial picturesque features and their eating and drinking life. As might be expected, the training-ship system is a controverted question. Some people say that we are over-doing the education business now, after neglecting it too long; that our stiff examinations will keep out youngsters who have the makings of excellent officers in them, while admitting "saps" and prigs; and that the *Britannia* lads are found to forget what they have learned there when they come to sea. Such, at least, is the loose mess-table talk, while the official reports from captains are, we believe, more favourable. The experiment must go on till its success has been more thoroughly tested; and one thing is certain: that whether a training-ship like the *Britannia* be the best system for education for youngsters or not, some system giving a higher education than we used to be content with must be established and adhered to. There is not a navy in the world which does not bestow special attention on this subject. There is not a naval change which does not make acquired knowledge more important to naval officers. And there is hardly a naval or political change which does not increase the difficulty which we feel in maintaining our old superiority. A naval college with a sea-going training-vessel attached to it is perhaps the best combination that we could hit upon; for we must not do anything to damage the seamanship element in the service, which is sufficiently imperilled by inevitable changes already.

There are certain facts about the condition of all naval men with which the public is not so familiar as it ought to be. One of these is the humble scale of their pay. The highest pay of any captain is 700*l.* a year—being that of the captain of the royal yacht; while less fortunate gentlemen receive, according to their seniority, from 365*l.*

to 547*l.* 10*s.*, with "command-money," which, in the majority of cases, is only 91*l.* 5*s.* When the expenses of commissioning a ship are taken into account, the captain's position is a very difficult one, and on half-pay with a family it is as bad in a different way. Commanders get 301*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; the vast majority of lieutenants 182*l.* 10*s.*; sub-lieutenants 66*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.*; and midshipmen 31*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.* This, of course, is the full-pay rate, and nobody can live on his pay till he has been half-a-dozen years in the service. For remuneration of this kind he must encounter all climates—the West Coast of Africa included—spend the best of his life in monotonous routine work away from home, and disqualify himself by a peculiar and isolated employment from ready access to other pursuits. On the other hand, he has little to set against all this now-a-days in the way of distinction, exciting adventure, prize-money, or rapidity of promotion. During the last half-century, the Admiralty's way of regulating "the stream of promotion" has been to dam it up, and to let it go off in "a spate," alternately. Every rush was followed by a block,—the duration of the block being proportionate to the violence of the rush. Promotion in the early stages is now rapid; but after that it is an affair first of interest and then of longevity. The result has been that we have had an army of veterans on our hands, and that we have had to retire them compulsorily at last (a few favourites, however, getting special consideration shown them,) at much cost of wounded pride and disappointed feeling. All things considered, it is no wonder if naval men are somewhat given to grumbling, and are not just now in the best possible humour. The state of public affairs in relation to their profession can hardly be expected to please them. In the Crimean war the navy had little opportunity of doing anything; and our recent foreign policy has had a tendency to place it in an inferior position. They are employed against Chinese and Japanese, but expected to be very civil and cautious with regard to anybody stronger. And when possible wars are discussed, we always hear of our "naval defences,"—never of our naval attack. Then, there are other navies springing up to dispute the palm with us. The Americans have made a prodigious start, and are aspiring to be a Mediterranean power. The Italians,—in spite of Lissa,—mean to be somebody at sea. The Prussians will soon have a fleet on the Baltic. Meanwhile, a painful uncertainty prevails as to what modern changes really amount to, and whether the odds are against us or not. And along with all this, there is a growing party who tell us that we must never attempt to be even the first naval power in the world again! What wonder, we say, if naval men are ill at ease, and less like the old light-hearted British tars of other times? If this be so, the proper course for their countrymen is to consider in what way any grievance they have can be best remedied, and to encourage them by that hearty confidence in their future which is inspired by every phase of their long past.

A Night on the Ortler Spitz.

THE following description of a perilous adventure is taken from the papers of the late Robert Jacob, Esq. (of Dublin), who, with his relative, Mr. Walpole, ascended the Ortler Spitz Mountain during a tour through the Tyrol in the month of August, 1861. The narrative was penned a few hours after the occurrences to which it refers took place.

We left the Albergo della Santa Maria at an early hour, and soon reached the summit of the Stelvio Pass, from which we had a fine view of the mountains of the Tyrol, Italy and Switzerland, for a vast distance around; the chief object of attraction being the majestic Ortler Spitz, the king of the Tyrolean mountains, its summit crowned with snow, and its sides seamed with glaciers. After a rapid descent by extemporized paths, which we made in order to avoid the weary zigzag road, we soon entered the Austrian dominions, and at noon reached the village of Trafoi.

Having determined to attempt the ascent of the Ortler Spitz, we at once made inquiries for guides, and, after a lengthened search, we discovered two men, Joseph Schöff and Anton Ortler, with whom we arranged to undertake the difficult enterprise next day. We spent the evening in making preparations for the ascent, laying in a stock of provisions, testing the ropes with which we were to be tied together, obtaining veils and spectacles to preserve our eyes from the dazzling glare of the sun's rays on the snow, and attending to the various other things which are requisite in an attempt of this kind. A considerable amount of interest was excited amongst the visitors at the hotel, and an English lady most obligingly offered her services to us as interpreter. We were roused at one o'clock next morning, having had but a brief period for repose; and after a hurried breakfast, we started at 2.30. The guide, Schöff, preceded us with a lantern, to direct our steps through the darkness which prevailed at that hour. Our path lay at first through meadows and then stretched up through tall gloomy pine woods, frequented by bears in winter. Shortly after three o'clock we reached a small chapel, where three jets of icy cold water pour from the bosoms of three saints, sculptured in stone. The little place looked weird enough by the light of our lantern, as we entered it to obtain a draught of the water. Daylight appeared shortly after, and about five o'clock we quitted the woods and mounted a long and wearisome slope, covered with loose stones, which

brought us to the foot of the first snow slope. Here we had our crampons fastened on, and though we found them awkward enough on the rocks, they were very useful on ice or hardened snow. We were now fairly on the snows of the Giant Ortler Spitz, the highest mountain in the Tyrol, where English foot had never trod, and we felt some little pleasure in being the first from our land to explore these wild and barely accessible heights.

We pursued our way up the steep slope, which was so soft that no step-cutting was needed to any extent—the axes being only occasionally brought into requisition. About eight o'clock we reached some rocks commanding a grand view of the snowy valleys, glaciers, and heights around, and halted for about an hour, while the guides went forward and cut steps up the ascent of ice which formed the upper portion of the vast *coulair*, up which our difficult path lay. Unfortunately for us, it was quite denuded of fresh or soft snow, and we were obliged to keep as near as possible to some rocks on our right, after leaving which we had rather a trying time. The cliff of ice was awfully steep, so that it appeared nearly perpendicular, and whenever we ventured to take to the rocks, enormous masses of the friable limestone, of which the mountain is composed, came away almost at a touch, thundering down with fearful velocity. At one or two places we were obliged to swing ourselves round projecting crags of rock, holding on tightly with our fingers to the narrow ledges which were, however, really safer than the larger rocks, although more difficult to climb on. Of course, we were all well roped together, and took every step with great anxiety, since one false one might prove so dangerous. The icy *coulair* formed a sort of frozen wave at the side, so that what I may compare to a chimney was made between it and the rocks up which we had to climb. The strata being very much curved, at one point there was nothing intervening between the slippery ice and a tremendous precipice beneath but a layer of loose stones about two feet wide. This appeared to me the worst place I ever was in yet, as the moment we set our feet on the stones they rattled away beneath our tread—now down the ice cliff on one side of us, now down the precipice at the other, according as our feet gave them direction. We had, as it were, to screw our nerves in a vice so as to give way to no weakness or shrinking.

After two hours of this difficult work we reached a little plain, and after clambering up another stony cliff, we commenced the ascent of some mighty domes of frozen snow and ice, apparently of endless extent and height, split by occasional crevasses, which we crossed carefully without much difficulty. The day was extremely hot, and the labour very great; we had been able to eat or drink very little (feeling for my own part unable to touch anything), and we sometimes despaired of achieving the task we had undertaken. The guides had told us that we should reach the summit at midday, but the great *coulair* being in such a bad state

they were quite put out in their calculations. At last, after two hours and a half more of great exertion we stood upon the summit of the Ortler Spitz at 2.30 P.M., just twelve hours after leaving the inn at Trafoi. We had now reached the desired spot, and from the top of this giant of the Tyrol, 13,000 feet above the sea level, we had a panoramic view of the Swiss and Tyrolean mountains in all their glory, which transcended anything I had ever before seen. The day was magnificent, and the peaks and icy valleys around glistened bright as gems in the blazing sunlight.

The top of the Ortler Spitz is a large dome, at the end of which appears a little projection of ice which seemed to us higher than the spot where we stood, although the guides said that the latter was the actual summit. This projection, or tooth of ice, was surrounded by the huge jaws of a yawning chasm, and from its crown to its base ran an overhanging cornice of ice which must be traversed if we should attempt it. It appeared sheer madness to venture at this late hour of the day upon the undertaking, with the prospect of a long downward journey before us, and we decided not to try it.

We now began to descend, although we most reluctantly turned our eyes from the stupendous view before us. We passed readily over the crevasses and the domes until we were on its last slope, when J. slipped and I was dragged along with him; but we were soon pulled back by the stout arms of the guides. The sensation of slipping in such a position was horrible, although only for a moment. The day now began to change, a black cloud appeared in the north, and the Swiss mountains stood out with a portentous clearness that warned us that a storm approached. We now arrived where the descent of the first half of the great ice-cliff commenced, and certainly it was a terrifying place to be in. I led the way while Schäff held the rope round my waist, J. following, fastened in like manner to Ortler. At the brink of the precipice two ravens flew up from the glen beneath, and perched on the rocks close by, maliciously croaking there, and refusing to be driven away—by no means raising our spirits by their appearance.

Sunset now drew near, and the mountains presented an astonishing scene. A huge black curtain of cloud appeared to be drawn across the upper part of the heavens, below which the myriad peaks around literally glowed like spires of lurid flame rising out of a sea of gold. The scene was awful in the extreme, and pen or pencil could never adequately represent the strange and exciting spectacle which displayed itself to our gaze. It seemed to us more like some weird vision of another world than anything we had ever expected to see upon this earth of ours. It was near 7 P.M. before we had descended the first half of the *coulair*, and we drew breath more freely when we reached the rocks which I mentioned before as having formed a resting-place during our ascent. The storm now slowly but surely approached, and we hurried on to descend the lower half of

the *couloir*. The guides had chosen another way, which was the cause of our being plunged into unforeseen difficulties.

The horrors of the upper passage were renewed, and as the darkness of the coming storm fast closed upon us, it became very difficult to plant our footsteps securely. We were lowered from rock to ice, and clambered from ice to rock, until we thought that the way could not be worse; yet still we could see no sign of the end, and it soon became certain that we must spend the night upon the Ortler Spitz. This was an appalling prospect, unprepared as we were for such an emergency; and well might the boldest heart feel a shudder at encountering the terrors of such a night as we now feared must be before us.

We had come to the worst spot in the descent, where we had to be lowered over a smooth jutting piece of rock, with nothing to hold on by, down to the glassy *couloir*, from whence we had to climb to a little hollow on the side of the mountain. I took one look at the gulf below me, and went down, keeping my self-command with difficulty. It was soon over, however, and I crept round to a ledge overhung by rocks. We were scarcely settled here, when the thunder came crashing around us, and the rain fell heavily. Schaff pointed, for our comfort, to another black chasm into which we had to be lowered, and said he feared there was no chance of our reaching Trafoi that night, in which we all agreed. It would have been certain destruction to have proceeded at that hour, yet the horrors of having to remain on the ledge for the night, almost overpowered us. This ledge, or rather sloping shelf of loose stones, was divided into two little hollows, and was covered by the overhanging rock above us, from which, unfortunately, there was a constant dropping of water, so that there was not a dry spot to be found. We could not move forward lest we should fall over the precipice which lay beneath; we could not sleep, for there was no place to lie down in; and we dared not sleep leaning against the rock, as it involved the danger of tumbling over also. We could not walk backwards and forwards, so as to keep ourselves warm with exercise, because the shelf we were on sloped so much, and the loose stones under our feet rolled down the height at every step. We had no food, no drink, no light, and our clothes were saturated with wet by the constant dropping from the rock over us. We were altogether in a most unenviable condition.

The storm now came on in earnest; the thunder rolled like ten thousand pieces of artillery, and the echoes reverberated through the mountains as if they never would end. The lightning was intense—flashing through the dark clouds; now in bright, white zigzags, and then in red streams of flame that lit up the peaks and snow-fields, as though they were on fire, while the great ice-cliff near us glowed as if it had been transmuted into one sheet of lava.

The scene was too awful for one to be able to look at with composure, and I strove to keep my eyes closed, but in vain,—each flash compelled

me to open them, and gaze on the brilliant spectacle around. The storm ceased after two hours' duration, and the moon shone out peacefully over the mountains, forming a striking contrast to the preceding scene. We were now shivering with cold in our wet clothes, but providentially there was no wind, otherwise I know not what we should have done. Ten o'clock arrived, and we had been here about two-and-a-half hours. I endeavoured to obtain some sleep leaning on a stone, while Schüff and I kept as close as we could together, in order to get a little warmth into our frames; the other guide had retired into a nook by himself. Eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock came. Oh! how slowly the weary night wore on! Many hours appeared to pass by, and yet when I looked at my watch by the moonlight, frequently not half-an-hour had really elapsed. We felt, however, we must try and win through, as it would never do to give way to despair.

One o'clock, two o'clock passed, and our situation was becoming agonizing. My eyes would not keep open, and yet each moment I was awake by a frightful forward movement, as if I were about to fall over the cliff. My brief doze appeared full of dreams, generally pleasant ones of home and repose. It was evidently now freezing, our teeth chattered with the cold, and we trembled from head to foot. Not a sound was to be heard save the bound of rocks or stones from the *couloir*, and the occasional roll of an avalanche. Sometimes the stones came tumbling over our heads, but we were well protected from them by the overhanging cliff. At three o'clock the moonlight began to fade away, and everything grew dim. Schüff had gone into the nook with the other guide, and J. and I stood together intently watching for the first glimmer of daybreak over the distant mountain tops. I scarcely moved my eyes now from the heights over which I knew the dawn would appear. At four o'clock we saw the welcome streaks of light, and at five o'clock I roused the guides, but to our horror one of them told us that he feared we could not reach Trafoi that day either. He said he was sick, and certainly looked worse after the night than any of us. The rain that had fallen the evening before had been frozen over the snow of the *couloir*, and had converted it into one smooth glassy surface, down every yard of which steps would have to be cut. As day advanced, Schüff revived, and sent Ortler to cut the steps, and at 7-30 we heard the welcome words, "Now you go forwards," and we braced up our nerves for the struggle, glad at any rate to leave the ledge where we had spent twelve such weary hours.

We had first to walk across the line of steps cut in the ice, until we reached the centre of the *couloir*, when we began to descend. We soon got to the end of these steps, and as fresh ones had to be cut as we descended our progress was slow, and the labour entailed on the leading guide very heavy. The rocks and stones came bounding down all this time,—the large ones with loud crashes, and the smaller

ones with a sound like the whizz of a rifle bullet. Our guides were evidently afraid of them, and we hurried on as well as we could, but there was a certain sort of excitement, as they whirled past, probably like that felt by soldiers in action when the bullets are heard flying past them. Schüff got a severe blow in the leg from a stone, and I was struck by a small one in the back. Ortler being exhausted at step-cutting, we tried to walk on the *couloir* without steps, but we had no sooner attempted it than J. (who had lost one of his crampons) slipped on the ice and was sliding away; but happily I had my alpenstock well in at the time, and was enabled to hold him up.

After three hours' hard work we reached some rocks, where we rested, and then we got quickly down the soft snow of the lower slope, at the foot of which we bade adieu to the regions of ice and snow, our way lying now through a steep stony descent, where we met a man who had been despatched by our kind hostess with refreshments for us. The heat was very great by this time, and I could not take either meat or wine; my mouth and throat were literally dry as if they had been made of parchment, in consequence of the long abstinence.

About noon we reached the woods, where unfortunately no water was to be had, and my sufferings from thirst were so great that I could scarcely drag myself along. At two o'clock we reached the little chapel where the three fountains are, and I rushed into it and drank copiously of the delicious water—the first thing that I had tasted with the least benefit for the last thirty-six hours. I was at once restored; the sense of fatigue vanished, and we walked on rapidly to Trafoi, which we reached after an absence of thirty-six hours; twelve occupied in the ascent, five in descending to our night's resting-place, twelve on that awful ledge, and seven in the final descent. The inhabitants had nearly all given us up for lost, and the report of it was brought away by some travellers leaving the place. Mr. H., one of the Alpine Club, who was staying at our hotel, felt confident, however, that we were safe. He and his wife had been watching us during the morning making our way on the *couloir*, like flies crawling down a wall, and on our arrival he came forward to greet us most cordially. After a light repast, we parted with our guides, having first proved our sense of their courage and careful attention by a suitable recognition of their services, and then retired to the rest we had so hardly earned. Next morning we awoke thoroughly refreshed, and found ourselves in no way the worse for all the hardships we had endured.

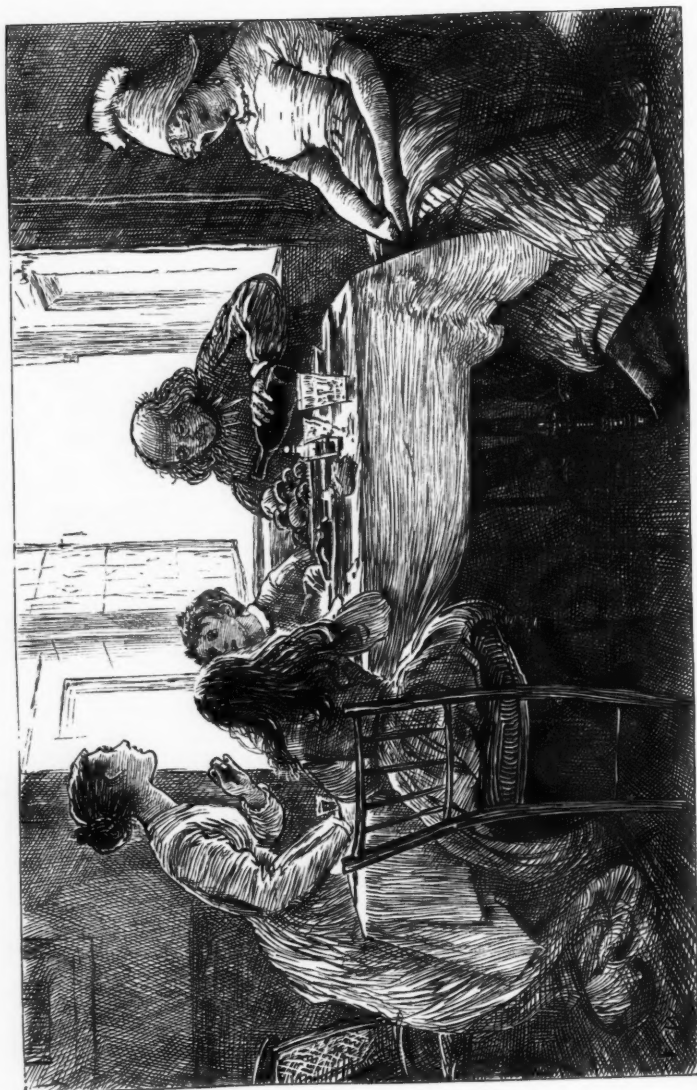
The spot that we spent the night on was about 11,000 feet above the level of the sea, as well as we could calculate. We could scarcely have lived through the night if there had been any wind, unprovided as we were with suitable covering of any kind. We felt truly thankful to Providence for our escape from such imminent peril, and resolved never

to risk our lives in a similar undertaking. Next morning we bid farewell to quiet little Trafoi, and walked down the valley to Prad, finding ourselves the objects of some curiosity to the inhabitants, who called us "the Ortler Herren," the news of the ascent having quickly been circulated through the neighbourhood. On our arrival at Prad, the curate and several of the townsfolk called to congratulate us on our escape, and we had to submit to a friendly catechizing on various points of interest connected with the ascent. They told us that telescopes had been brought to bear on us while we were on the mountain, from various places in the surrounding district, as far as Heiden in the upper valley of the Adige. We could not help being impressed by the simple, kindly manners of the people in this portion of the Tyrol, unspoiled as they are by that great influx of tourists, which in other parts of the Continent has exercised such a prejudicial effect upon the character of the inhabitants.

Our experience of the conduct of the Austrian soldiery was far more favourable than that of some other travellers, as we found both the officers and privates courteous in their bearing to us, and in different instances had reason to contrast their attention and civility to strangers with the repelling hauteur assumed by certain youthful warriors nearer home; but it may have been that we were also a little biassed in their favour by the fact that the ropes which had served us so well on the mountain were kindly furnished from the fort in the neighbourhood of Trafoi.

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"LET US DRIVE TO THE REScue OF THE ARREST," SAID PHILIP, SOLEMNLY.

The Village on the Cliff.

CHAPTER IX.

REINE IN HER FARMYARD.



ATHERINE found herself transported, as if by magic, from the long dreary brick-enclosed hours to a charming world, where vine garlands were wreathing under cloudless skies. There was at once more light, more sound, more sentiment and drowsy peace in it than she had ever known in all her life before. She awakened to a dazzle streaming through the vine round her window, and flickering upon the red brick floor of her little room; to a glitter, to a cheerful vibration of noises. Some one would bring her a little roll and a cup of steaming coffee, and then, when she was dressed, the children would come tapping and fum-

bling at her door. Little Henri de Tracy sometimes attempted a réveillée upon his horn, which would be instantly suppressed by a voice outside. Nanine, who was nine years old, and had elegant little manners like a lady, would wish Catherine good morning; and Madelaine, who was four and "très raisonnable" Suzanne her nurse said, consented to be kissed through the iron-work balusters of the staircase.

The children would lead the way through the great dining-room, where Baptiste was hopping about on one leg, polishing the shining floor, across the terrace, through green avenues and gardens, looking a little neglected, but fresh with dew, and luxuriant with flowers and fruit-trees. Pumpkins, carnations, and roses were growing between vine-clad walls. There were bees, and there was an old stone well full of deep water, like Jocelyn's well—

Dont la chaîne rouillée a poli la margelle,
Et qu'une vigne étroit de sa verte dentelle.

From the terrace there was a distant view of the sea,—of the blue line of the horizon flashing beyond the golden corn-fields.

One morning Nanine said, "We are to go to the Ferme, Miss George, to-day, with a commission from grandmamma. We will go out at the door in the Potager, if you'd not mind and come back the other way." It was all the same to Catherine, who followed her little conductors through the kitchen-garden door out into the open country, and along the path skirting the corn-fields which spread to the sea. Henri went first, blowing his horn, Nanine loitered to pick the poppies and bleu-bleus, as she called the corn-flowers, Madelaine trotted by Catherine, holding her hand. It was like the nursery rhyme. Miss George thought of the little boy blue, only the sheep were wanting.

From outside the farm at Tracy still looks more like a ruined fortress than a farm where milk is sold in cans, and little pats of butter prepared, and eggs counted out in dozens, and pigs fattened for the market. All over Normandy you come upon these fortified abbayes, built for praying and fighting once, and ruined now, and turned to different uses. It is like Samson's riddle to see the carcase of the lions with honey flowing from them. "Out of the eater came forth meat; out of the strong came forth sweetness." There is a great archway at the farm at Tracy, with heavy wooden doors studded with nails. There is rust in plenty, and part of a moat still remaining. The hay is stacked in what was a chapel once; the yellow trusses are hanging through the crumbling flamboyant east window. There is a tall watch-tower, to which a pigeon-cote has been affixed, and low cloisters that are turned into outhouses and kitchens. The white walls tell a story of penance and fierce battlings, which are over now, as far as they are concerned. The great harvest waggons pass through the archway without unloading; so do the cows at milking time. Cocks and hens are pecketing the fallen grains, the pigeons circle overhead suddenly white against the sky.

As the children and Miss George pushed open the heavy doors and came into the wide sunny court, a figure descended the stone steps leading from the strong tower where the apples are kept. It was Reine in her white coiffe, who advanced with deliberate footsteps, carrying an earthenware pan under her arm, and who stood waiting in the middle of the great deserted-looking place, until they should come up to her.

Catherine wondered whether all Normandy peasant-girls were like this one. It was a princess keeping the cows. There she stood, straight, slender, vigorous; dressed in the Sunday dress of the women of those parts, with this difference, that instead of two plastered loops of hair like a doll's, a tawny ripple flowed under the lace of her cap and low over her arched brows. As for her eyes, they were quick dancing grey eyes, that looked black when she was angry—clouds and lightning somebody once told her they were, but the lightning became warm sunlight when she smiled upon those she liked. She smiled now, for Reine was a child-lover, and even little De Tracys were welcome, as they came towards her with

their bunches of flowers out of the fields, and the pretty strange lady following.

"Who are you bringing me?" Reine asked, "and what do you want, my children? Madelaine, shall I give you some milk and some peaches?"

"Out of Josette's little *ménage*," said Madelaine, while Henri cried out, "Oh, there is old Paris!" and went and clasped the big dog round the neck.

Nanine meanwhile advancing very politely and prettily, in a smart little toilette, explained that Miss George was a demoiselle Anglaise who was staying with them, and that they had come to request Mademoiselle Chrétien to supply them with butter for a few days. "Our cows are ill," said Nanine, shrugging her shoulders, "and we are all but reduced to dry bread."

"There are others besides you who eat their bread dry," said Reine; "but your grandmamma can have as much butter as she likes, Mademoiselle Nanine, at the market price, since she has money to pay for it." She did not say this rudely, but rather sadly, and then she suddenly turned to Catherine, and asked her if she would not like some milk too. "And so you are English?" Reine said in her odd sweet voice, pushing open a door with both her hands. Reine's hands were not like Madame Binaud's, two red paws which could be seen shining a mile off; but thin and white like a lady's. Catherine glanced at them a little curiously as they lay outspread upon the oak, and she saw that Reine wore a signet-ring on one finger—then she looked up in her face again, and Reine Chrétien caught the glance and melted somehow towards the little thing with the startled look and curious soft eyes that seemed to be taking everything in. The love-making of friendship is not unlike that of sentiment, and friends are friends sometimes in an instant almost, even though they may not have set the feeling to the tune of words and protestations.

I hardly know which of these two women needed the other most, when they met by chance in the silent, sunny court-yard that morning. In after-times, doubt, trouble, cruel suspicion, pain and jealousy came to part them, but they were faithful to one another through it all. There was something to forgive and to forget for each of them, but they loved one another well enough to be able to remember and to need no forgiveness. They suited. Somehow, there was a certain affinity between them which is priceless in friendship. It is worth all the virtues and merits and accomplishments put together to people who care for one another, or who ought to care.

Catherine, who had never in her life spoken to a Normandy peasant before, listened and looked with all her eyes. There was Reine, dressed like a doll, in flaps and apron and ornaments; but Catherine was touched and fascinated by the grave, noble face, the pathetic voice. Alas! she was not the first Reine had charmed.

The girl gave the children their milk out of a great brass pan, standing

surrounded by little barrels for making butter. "Should you like to see the farm?" she asked them. "This is where we keep our cider," and, opening a door into an old vaulted cellar, she showed them six huge butts, standing side by side, and reaching to the ceiling. Each one of them was large enough to drown the whole party. Nanine exclaimed at their size. "They are half of them empty already," said Reine, laughing. "Dominique alone could drink one of those for his supper. I don't offer you any," she said to Catherine, leading them away, and locking the door behind her. "I know English people do not like cider," and she sighed as she spoke.

She went before them through many courts, opening arched doors, into store-rooms heaped with the oily colza grain. She showed them a wheat-field enclosed by four walls, against which nectarines and apricots were ripening. The cows were all out in the meadows, but there were a few sheep in a stable; and at last she brought them into the great farm-kitchen. It had been added on to the rest of the buildings; so had Reine's own room, which was over it, and reached by stone steps from outside.

Petitpère was sitting at the table, eating bread and soup. He looked hot and tired, but he got up to make a bow and a little speech. He was a hospitable and courteous old fellow, whatever his other defects may have been. "Ladies, you are welcome to the farm," he said. "Pray excuse my continuing my breakfast. I have been out since five o'clock in the fields, with the soldiers."

"We have not men enough to get in the harvest," Reine explained to Catherine, "and we send for the soldiers to help us."

"And have you, too, been up since sunrise?" Catherine asked.

"I see it every morning of my life," said Reine. "I should like to show it you from our archway. The sea awakens first, all our animals stir as if they knew; it is a most beautiful hour," she said gravely, "and like a prayer before the work."

What was there about Reine Chrétien that attracted and interested her so curiously? Catherine asked herself this, and also how was it and why was it that the place seemed so strangely familiar? Had she been there in some previous existence? She turned and looked round about. The window, the great cupboard, with the gleaming hinges, she had seen them before somewhere—she could not understand it. Petitpère went on composedly drinking his soup; Catherine still stood in a puzzle. She had a silly little fancy there would be a bright brass pot in one of the corners, but it was not there as she expected—she could not understand it at all.

Reine begged them to come and see her again, and stood watching them thoughtfully under the archway as they went home across the fields where the soldiers were reaping with peaceful scythes, and the corn fell against the horizon, and the figures of the gleaners with their golden troven treasures stood out with garments flying against the sky. Then

she turned and crossed the court once more, and once she stopped and pulled a letter from her pocket and read it over twice.

Catherine thought as she walked back that morning that if she could have forgotten all that had passed before she came to Tracy, all the people she had known, all the things she had thought, she could breathe on for years happily enough in this fruitful country. But who is there who would forget willingly what has gone before? There are few who would not remember more if they could, if it were even the pangs they have forgotten.

As they reached the court-yard, they met Monsieur de Tracy heavily booted and gaitered, all dressed in white, and finishing his morning rounds. Monsieur Fontaine was with him, also in linen clothes. He acted as a sort of agent or manager in Tracy's absence, and used often to come up to talk over business and bailiffs. They all met just inside the iron gates of the court-yard. Fontaine bowed profoundly to the pretty fresh-looking little Miss with the great bunch of field-flowers in her hand, and the blue ribbons in her crisp black hair. The children clustered round their father, and Henri held him prisoner while Nanine stuck poppies into all his button-holes, and little Madelaine, who could reach no higher, ornamented his gaiters with flowers.

Meanwhile the following conversation was going on:—

"You have quite recovered from the fatigue of your journey, I trust?" said Fontaine. "One need scarcely ask mademoiselle the question."

"Oui, monsieur," said Catherine, looking up shyly.

"And mademoiselle has already surrounded herself with flowers," said Fontaine, alluding to the bouquet.

"Oui, monsieur," said Catherine, who did not know what else to say.

"And I hope that mademoiselle is pleased with our country?" said Fontaine, speaking both in his public and his private capacity.

"Oui, monsieur," said Catherine, with great originality, half laughing at her own stupidity, and moving away towards the house, to put an end to such a silly conversation.

It was like a scene in a play, like a picture on a fan or a bonbon box. It seemed as if nothing could be less serious. The little banality, the bow, the curtsy, it was a nothing Catherine thought, or she would have thought so had she thought at all. To the children it was an instant of great anxiety: would the flowers tumble off their papa when he moved his legs?—but Catherine tripped away unconscious and unconcerned.

Poor Fontaine's fate, too, was decided in that instant, when he bowed so profoundly, and Catherine turned away with her quick little smile. Not at Bayeux, not at Caen, not including Madame la Sous-Préfète herself, was there any one to be compared to this charming young Englishwoman, thought the maire. As for a *dol*, he would prefer Miss George with a moderate sum, to Reine with all her fortune; and then something told him that the English were so orderly, such excellent housekeepers, caring nothing for follies and expenses. "Toilette is their

aversion," thought Fontaine, remembering at the same time some of the bills he had paid for Toto's poor mother. He built a castle in the air, a Tower of Babel it was, poor fellow, reaching to heaven. He perceived himself passing Reine Chrétien, with a lovely and charmingly mannered Madame Fontaine beside him, elegantly but not expensively attired; he pictured her to himself embroidering by his fire-side, superintending his ménage. As he thought of Catherine, a sweet, arch, gentle glance came dazzling his eyes, like sunlight through the double eyeglass, and at that minute Jean moved, after patiently standing until his decoration was complete, and alas! for poor little Madelaine, all the flowers fell off him.

"Good morning, Monsieur le Maire," said Madame de Tracy, suddenly appearing at the hall-door. "Won't you stay and breakfast with us?"

"Madame," said the maire, "you are too good. I shall be quite delighted."

Catherine liked the breakfast-hour at Tracy. They all came in cheerful and freshly dressed, and took their places in the long, picturesque-looking salle, with its vaulted roof and many windows. The food was carefully and prettily served and ornamented; the white bright china glittered on the table; the golden and purple fruit was heaped up bountifully. She liked to look at it all from her place by Madame de Tracy, as she liked looking at Marthe's pale, beautiful head opposite to her, or Madame Jean's smart ribbons. Catherine used sometimes to compare the scene at Tracy—the cool green windows, the festive-looking table, the ripple of talk—to the sombre dining-room in Eaton Square, where the smoke had settled in clouds upon the faded stucco walls, where Mr. Butler sliced the eternal legs of mutton while everybody sat round and watched the process in silence and anxiety.

Monsieur Fontaine sat next Catherine to-day; Madame de Tracy sent them in together. She could not help thinking as she followed the couple what an easy solution there might be to all her difficulties. The little thing would be the very wife for Fontaine,—he would make an excellent husband. It would be a home for her,—the maire's admiration was evident, and Ernestine had been too provoking that morning.

There had been an explanation, ending as explanations generally end, by hopelessly confusing matters. Ernestine declared with the utmost liveliness that she had not room to lodge a fly in her apartments at Paris, and that nothing would induce her to have a governess in the house.

"But it is certain neither I nor your grandmother require one," said poor Madame de Tracy, at her wit's end. "And we go to V—— on the twentieth of next month. What am I to do? How can I tell her?"

It seemed like a second inspiration to this impulsive lady when on her way to the breakfast-room she happened to see the little scene in the court-yard. The bow, the respectful look of admiration, which said nothing to Miss George, were like signals of approaching succour to the distressed hostess. Madame de Tracy thought no more of parcelling out the future of two living souls than she did of matching her cap-strings. As she sat

there at the head of the table she talked, schemed, made, looked after them all, carved out destinies and chicken with admirable precision and rapidity. "Baptiste, take this wing to Monsieur de Tracy. Marthe, I know it is no use offering you any. Monsieur le Maire, do you prefer omelette?"

This was the first Friday that Catherine had spent at Tracy, and she saw with a thrill that omelettes were being handed round, and great flowery roast potatoes and fried fish. There were, however, chickens too, and cutlets, of which, as a Protestant, she felt bound to partake. So did Jean and his grandmother. His mother was of an amphibious persuasion, sometimes fish, sometimes flesh, as the fancy took her. She was by way of being a Protestant, but she went to mass with her family, and fasted on Fridays, when Marthe and Ernestine were there. Madame de Tracy *mère*, as they called the old lady upstairs, had a dispensation. Catherine was rather disappointed to see them all quietly peppering and salting the nice little dishes before them, and enjoying their breakfasts. She thought of her aunt Farebrother's warnings; the scene did not look very alarming. Monsieur Fontaine, although strictly adhering to the rules laid down by his church, managed to make an excellent repast, attending at the same time to his companions' wants, and passing salt and pepper and sugar with great empressment and gallantry. Catherine herself, before breakfast was over, became conscious of his devotion, and, I am sorry to say, was woman enough to be amused and not displeased by it. Once she caught Madame de Tracy's glance; there were no frozen looks now to chill and terrify. "I am determined I will speak to him on the subject immediately after breakfast," Madame de Tracy was thinking.

"Monsieur le Maire, I want to show you my new plantation. Ernestine, little Madelaine is longing for a bunch of grapes. Baptiste, has Madame de Tracy *mère's* breakfast been taken up?"

"Madame desires a little more chicken," said Baptiste respectfully. "Mademoiselle Picard has just come down to fetch some, also a little Burgundy wine and an egg and some figs."

Catherine used to wonder at the supplies which were daily sent up from every meal to this invisible invalid. She had seen the shutters of her rooms from without, but she never penetrated into the interior of the apartment which Madame de Tracy *mère* inhabited. Once or twice in passing she had heard a hoarse voice like a man's calling Picard or Baptiste (they were the old lady's personal attendants); once Catherine had seen a pair of stumpy velvet shoes standing outside her door. That was all. Old Madame de Tracy was a voice, an appetite, a pair of shoes to Catherine, no more.

Everybody is something to somebody else. Certain hieroglyphics stand to us in lieu of most of our neighbours. Poor little Catherine herself was a possible storm and discussion to some of the people present—to Marthe a soul to be saved, to Madame de Tracy a problem to be solved and comfortably disposed of, to Monsieur Fontaine, carried away by his feelings, the unconscious Catherine appeared as one of the many possible

Madame Fontaines in existence, and certainly the most graceful and charming of them all. There was only that unfortunate question of the *dot* to outweigh so much amiability and refinement.

After breakfast everybody disappeared in different directions. The children and Miss George went up into Madame de Tracy's bedroom, where she had desired them to sit of a morning. It was a comfortable Napoleonian apartment, with bureaux and brass inlaid tables, upon which bonbonnières and liqueur stands and arrangements for sugar and water were disposed. A laurel-crowned clock was on the chimney-piece, over which the late M. de Tracy's silhouette legion of honour and lock of hair were hanging neatly framed and glazed. The children sat with their heads together spelling out their tasks. Catherine's bright eyes glanced up and round about the room; and out across the gardens, and the vine-clad roofs of the outhouses, the flies came buzzing. There was silence and a scent of ripe fruit from the garden. Suddenly, with a swift pang, she remembered that it was a week to-day since she had said good-by to Rosy and Totty, and to Dick. The three names used to come together somehow in her thoughts. A week already since she had bade him a hasty farewell at the door of a room with everybody standing round. . . . She could not bear to think of it, she thought, as she began to recall every expression, every sound, every aspect of that instant, which had been to her like Mahomet's, and which had seemed to last for a thousand years.

The last few days had been so sunny, so easy, so harmonious a medley of sweet summer weather, and gardens and grapes, and lively talk, that Catherine had been too much absorbed to dream. People do not dream when they are happy. For the last few days she had remembered without bitterness. Life seemed to have grown suddenly bearable, and almost easy once more. If she had known how short a time her tranquillity was to last, she might have made more of it perhaps, and counted each minute as it passed. But she did not know, and she wasted many of them as she was doing now, as we all do, in unavailing hankering and regrets,—precious little instants flying by only too quickly, and piping to us very sweetly, and we do not dance. Looking back, one laments not so much the unavoidable sorrows of life, as its wasted peace and happiness, and then more precious minutes pass in remorse for happiness wasted long ago.

"I wonder what grandmamma is talking to Monsieur Fontaine about," said Nanine, standing on tiptoe and peeping out. "Look, Miss George, how they go walking up and down the allée verte."

"Monsieur Fontaine seems very much excited," said Catherine, smiling, as Fontaine began gesticulating suddenly, and stopped short in his walk to give more emphasis to what he was saying.

If she could have heard what he was saying!

CHAPTER X.

A BOUQUET OF MARGUERITES.

ABOUT this time one or two people came occasionally to stay in the house for a night or two: the De Vernons, who were neighbours, young Robert de Coëtlogon, Ernestine's brother, and others from time to time. Catherine did not see very much of them; they came and they went without any reference to her. Madame de Tracy was very kind to her always. Even Madame Jean had melted and got to like the bright-faced little thing, although she never altered her vexatious determination to admit no governess into her house. Madame de Tracy had begged that Catherine might not be told. She did not want the poor child to be unnecessarily distressed, and she looked so happy and comfortably settled, that it seemed a shame to disturb her, when, perhaps, everything might arrange itself smoothly, and without any explanations. Madame de Tracy used to take Catherine out sometimes. One day they drove to Bayeux, with its cathedral towers and winding streets and jewellers' shops all twinkling. Another day they went to Petitport: the fishwives looked up grinning and nodding as the lady of the manor passed by. "Do you see the pretty little *châlet* on the cliff overlooking the sea?" said Madame de Tracy, pointing to the little house with the pink curtains, and all its wooden balconies and weathercocks. "That is where Fontaine lives. Is it not a charming little place? I have to speak to him. We will leave the ponies down here at Pélottier's." And Madame de Tracy put the reins into some idler's hands, and panted up the cliff, too busy and preoccupied and breathless to glance at the sapphire sea at her feet.

Fontaine was not at home, but an old gentleman's head was to be seen through one of the windows, and a fat old lady with mustachios was sitting in the garden with her hands on her two knees, and her feet on a footstool, and Toto was galloping round and round the little gravel path.

"My son is out, unfortunately, Madame la Comtesse," said the old lady, bowing from her seat to Madame de Tracy, who remained outside the gate. "He will be in despair when I tell him you passed this way," she added, stiffly.

"I hope you are well, Madame Mérard," said Madame de Tracy, willing to propitiate. "Your son gives me news of you from time to time. What a charming little habitation this is!"

"They offered us five hundred francs a month for it only yesterday," said Madame Mérard, with dignity. "I do all I can to prevail upon Charles to let it. Rents are enormous just now. One should make one's profit when one can. But Charles will not hear reason."

Meanwhile Toto and Catherine were making acquaintance. The little boy had come up to look at the pretty lady his papa had told him about; and Catherine, bending over the low railing and holding out her hand,

said, "What nice flowers you have got in your garden. Will you give me one of them?"

"Papa and I water them every evening," said Toto, picking a slug-eaten specimen, and holding it up. "I have a little watering-pot of my own."

The sea looked so blue, the shutters so green, the sunlight so yellow, the margarets so brilliant, that Catherine's eyes were dazzled, and she scarcely noticed the curious, dissatisfied glances old Madame M  rard was casting in her direction. Madame de Tracy, however, saw them, and quickly hurried Catherine away, for fear she should be frightened by this somewhat alarming person.

"Pray tell Monsieur le Maire we asked for him," said Madame de Tracy as they walked away, bowing and forcing herself to be civil to the old lady of the ch  t  let.

For Fontaine himself Madame de Tracy began to feel almost a sentimental interest. She looked upon him from an entirely new point of view; a bore no longer, but a hero of romance, an enthusiastic and disinterested lover. Madame de Tracy felt that if she were Catherine, nothing in the world would be more delightful to her than a marriage with Monsieur Fontaine. "Handsome, amiable, warm-hearted, a good man of business, musical, universally respected: it is a piece of good fortune I never dared hope for," said the ch  t  laine to herself. "I should like the marriage to take place, if possible, before the 15th of next month. It was too absurd of Sarah Butler to alarm me so unnecessarily about Dick.—One might be very comfortable in that nice house of Fontaine's," said Madame de Tracy aloud. "Don't you think so, Catherine?"

"Oh, yes," said Catherine, not knowing what she was saying.

Another time Madame de Tracy suddenly asked her how she should like to pass her life among them always? Catherine thought that she was speaking of her as a governess, and said, with grateful effusion, "You are so good to me; I am more happy with you than I could be with anybody else. I almost forget I am a governess."

"My dear child, I meant how should you like to settle down among us and marry?" said Madame de Tracy, apparently unconcerned.

"I shall never marry," said Catherine, turning away disappointed, with a wistful, perplexed look in her eyes.

Madame de Tracy did not press the subject, but she went on asking Fontaine to breakfast and dinner, until Ernestine declared it was quite intolerable, and even Marthe gently remonstrated.

Catherine looked happy and contented, but presently, while all was going on as usual, there came a secret change. Outside, everything was the same, inside it was all different. These two existences side by side, "l'  me et la b  te," as De Maistre calls them, seem sometimes to lead two lives almost apart, leading in different directions with different results. Do they in their differences supplement one another, one is sometimes

tempted to ask, and keep the balance even? In one calm and uneventful existence, angels may know of terrible tragedies, of happiness, and overwhelming misfortune, scarcely acknowledged even by the "bête" itself; whereas another life outwardly hopeless, deserted, unsuccessful in everything, may from within have won all the prizes that seem to have failed it.

When Catherine had been a little time at Tracy, when she began to know her way about the house, and the vine-grown garden, and along the hedgeless paths to the sea, to the farm, to the church; narrow paths skirting the fields, dust-blown, fringed with straggling flowers and scattered with stones—when she had tasted her fill of the grapes that were sweetening upon the walls, when she had gathered handfuls of the flowers that were growing all about the gardens and courts in a sweet yet disordered luxuriance—when all this had grown familiar, she began to turn away from it all, and look back once more towards the past which was already beginning to glow with a distant radiance. It was like some one dazzled for a little by a sudden illumination who begins to see clearly again—more clearly, alas! than before.

She had met Reine once or twice in her walks, and had promised to go and see her.

"I shall look out for you every day until you come," said Reine, in her odd jarring voice, that sometimes began harshly, and ended in a pathetic cadence. "It is not often that any one comes to see me that I care for."

Reine had, like others infinitely wiser and better than herself, to pay a certain penalty of loneliness and misapprehension which seems to be the doom of all those who live upon the mountain tops. Catherine, too, was lonely in her way, and the country girl's cordial sympathy was very grateful and sweet to her. But Catherine was lonely from outward influences, and not from inner causes. Poor little soul, it was not for the mountain tops that she longed. Any green valley, any fertile, tranquil plain, would have contented her, if she could only have seen the shadow of one person falling across it and advancing towards her.

One Sunday evening—it was the day after she had called at the *châlet*—Catherine came down dressed for dinner before anybody else. She came into the drawing-room. It was empty, and one lamp only was standing upon a table, and casting its circlet of light upon the cloth. It lit up a card-rack, and Madame de Tracy's paroissien with its golden cross, and some letters which had just arrived by the post, and which had been left there by the servant. Catherine had a book in her hand (it was *Eugénie Grandet*, which M. de Tracy had lent her), and she walked quietly across the dark room to the light, and knelt down by the table to read, as she had a trick of doing when she was alone. But she did not open her novel: in an instant she saw one letter lying there with the others, and she started with a sort of shock, and let the book fall on the table, and the poor little heart gave a great leap, and began throbbing and crying aloud

in its own language. If Catherine had seen Dick himself she might have been less moved. A calm belongs to certainty which does not come when there is only a hint, a possible chance, an impossible disappointment in store. "Was he coming? Oh, was he coming, perhaps?"

Catherine could not herself have told you how it was that she recognized his handwriting in an instant among all the others. She had only once seen his initials on the fly-leaf of a book—but she knew it—she did not need the English post-mark to tell her whence the letter came: here was his writing and she might not read it, here was a secret he himself had closed and sealed against her. His thoughts, his words, were there, but they were not for her. It seemed to her suddenly as if the thing in the whole world she most longed for was that letter—even more than to see him again. Did it come straight from the river-side? She remembered a table in the studio where books, and loose papers, and envelopes were lying: was that where it was written? She longed to take it up and to read the post-mark, and to look at the stamp upon the seal. With a sudden movement like a child's, she put her hands behind her to keep them out of temptation, and then, poor little foolish, foolish thing, she bent suddenly forward and touched it with her lips.

A minute afterwards she would have given, oh, how much! not to have done this. She sat there in scorn with her own weakness, angry with herself, indignant; the red and white flames were still coming and going in her cheeks, when Madame de Tracy came bustling into the room, followed by the inevitable M. Fontaine, who had just arrived.

"This is the only punctual person in the house, Monsieur le Maire," said Madame de Tracy, smiling and nodding at Catherine as she spoke, and then she went straight up to the letters, and then she looked up curiously at Catherine a second time, and caught the girl's odd, wistful glance, and saw her suddenly change colour. As for Fontaine, he thought he had never seen Miss George in greater beauty. "If she were dressed by one of our first modistes in Caen," thought Monsieur Fontaine, "not Madame la Sous-Préfette herself would present a more distinguished appearance." He took a chair and sat down opposite to her in the lamp-light, and began thanking her for her kindness to his little boy the day before.

"Toto has been talking of you ever since, mademoiselle," said Monsieur le Maire. "His grandmother and I had some difficulty in preventing him from quitting his bed to accompany me here to-night. Toto has a great deal of character, poor little fellow," sighed Fontaine, with real kindness and tenderness. "He has no mother, and one is always afraid of not being gentle enough with him. I am afraid we are not quite so decided as we ought to be."

It was impossible not to like Fontaine when he talked about his little son. This man was genuinely and unaffectedly kind-hearted and affectionate. He was absurd, prosy, fussy; he had all sorts of tiresome peculiarities, but he was incapable of a harsh or unkind action.

Madame de Tracy opened her letters, and read them one by one. Catherine answered Fontaine from beyond the sea, as it were; from the river-side, from the quaint old studio; listening to some one else the whole time, to a distant music, playing across all the days that had passed since she heard it.

Everybody began to enter the room. "Nothing for me?" said Ernestine, coming in, in a marvellous shimmering toilette. "It is too provoking! people never write—Jean sends me a telegram when he goes away . . . Isn't this from Dick?" she continued, looking over her mother-in-law's shoulder. "What does he say?"

"We will talk it over another time," said Madame de Tracy, in a constrained sort of way—and she handed the letter to Ernestine.

"He asks for *fricandeau*!" said Ernestine, looking puzzled.

"Poor little prodigal!" said Jean, laughing kindly, and in his turn beginning to read.

Queen's Walk, Sept. 1.

MY DEAR AUNT—I have been working very hard, or I should have written to you before. There is a bit of the cliff at Petitport which must come into my picture, and I am thinking of running over before the wedding. Will you take me and my canvas for a day or two, and once more prepare the *fricandeau* for your affectionate

R. B.

P.S.—Uncle Charles has been buying some wonderful sherry, he says. Hervey is gone on a walking tour with Francis. The affair is settled for the 9th.

This was the letter Jean de Tracy read in silence. Madame de Tracy for once looked stern, and glanced meaningly at her son, as he returned it. She folded it up without a word.

Catherine's troubled manner, Dick's proposal to return so soon again, had filled her with vague alarm once more. Dick might be unconscious, serious, amusing himself with a passing flirtation—it was impossible to say what he was about. He had certainly declared once that Miss George was nothing to him, but it was well to be on the safe side. "We must make some excuse to keep him away a little longer," thought Madame de Tracy. She wanted to be a good genius to all these people. She liked managing, arranging: she meant rather well: it was convenient to dispose of Miss George, and amusing to occupy herself with these sentimental matters. How bitterly she regretted afterwards the irrepensible work she had accomplished! The good lady disquieted herself a good deal at one time as to whether she had not, perhaps, materially interfered with the plans of Providence.

They seemed to drop the subject by tacit consent. Ernestine asked no more questions. Catherine's heart gave one more flutter, and sank down and down. Ah, why would they not at least talk, and say what they meant. This was all she was to know. This was all the uncertainty: all her life she might expect no more—nothing else. This horrible instinct of what they were thinking was her only certainty. To Catherine, the sight of the letter had brought everything back with a rush. Poor little thing, she had thought her house was swept and garnished, and here were seven

devils worse than the first who had taken possession. It was an absurdity, a childishness, but she longed for that letter. The sudden conviction that for all her life she should have no right even to read what he had written, even to ask a question or to speak his name, was a sort of passing torture. It lasted until dinner was announced, some ten minutes after. It seemed like an hour of agony to Catherine, there in the lamplight, sitting in her muslins as if nothing had happened. It was nonsense; and yet she suffered as keenly as from any of the certainty that came to her later. From his hand it was easy to bear any blow; but to be parted by others . . .

"Permit me, mademoiselle, to have the honour," said Monsieur le Maire, offering his arm.

Catherine suddenly felt as if she hated poor Fontaine, ambling and complimenting beside her, as if it was a cruel mockery of Fate to come with this absurd compromise to jeer at her and turn her into ridicule. She had never before felt so sure of poor Fontaine's admiration, and never thought of it so seriously. All dinner-time she was silent; she turned from him—she was almost rude. He had never before seen her so little amiable, so inattentive.

Monsieur Fontaine departed early in the evening, very crestfallen and out of spirits. For the first time in his life he told himself his heart was really touched. He was humble, as most vain people are, and he alternated from absurd complacency to utter despondency. Never until now had he felt like this about any one. His first wife was a small heiress, and the match had been purely one of convenience. For Reine, a terrified fascination induced him reluctantly to come forward at his mother's suggestion; but Catherine's gentleness charmed and touched him at once. Here was a person he could understand and sympathize with. He longed to protect her, to make some great sacrifice for her, to bring her home proudly to his chalet and garden, and to say, "All this is yours; only love me a little and be good to Toto." "My excellent mother will regret her want of fortune," thought Fontaine. "Alas! who knows whether she will ever have the occasion to do so. And yet," said the maire to himself, with a certain simple dignity, "that child might do worse than accept the hand of an honest man." He did not go into his chalet through the kitchen as usual, but walked down the garden to his "cabane," a small wooden sentry-box facing the sea. It had been erected at the bottom of the sloping embankment for the convenience of bathing. A little heap of white stones that Toto had placed upon the seat were gleaming in the darkness. Fontaine pushed them carefully into one corner, and then sat down and smoked one cigar after another until quite late in the night.

Meanwhile, the drawing-room of the château was still lighted up. Some one had been singing, the others had been dancing, but Catherine would not join them. Poor child, was the music of her life only to be for other people to dance to? Were her dreams of love to be so cruelly realized? Fontaine, with all his devotion, attention, conversation, was

not as much alive to Catherine as that one little bit of paper in Madame de Tracy's pocket.

Catherine was standing ready in the hall next morning when the children came running up to her. She had awakened late, refreshed by a long dreamless sleep, and she thought she had shaken off the vivid impressions of the night before. But how relentlessly people are pursued in life by any idea which has once taken possession of them! Everything seems to suggest and bring it back: the very stones cry out; we open a book, and we read something concerning it; chance people speak of it to us; even the children in their play told Catherine that she was alone, and had neither home nor friend to shield her. The children went into the kitchen-garden, and Miss George followed them there.

Catherine sat down on the side of the old well; the vines were creeping up the iron bars, the grapes were hanging between the leaves. There was one great ripe bunch dropping against the sky, painted purple upon the blue. A few wasps were floating drowsily; a bird flew swiftly by, glancing down for one instant with its bright sleepy eye. There was again that scent of fruit and indescribable sweetness in the air. As she sat there, Catherine began to feel as if she had known it all from the beginning. It was like that strange remembrance in the farm-kitchen, only less vivid. It was all very sweet and lovely; but she thought, with a sudden thrill, that the ugliest London street along which Dick Butler had walked would be more to her than this.

Was she never to see him again? ah, was she never to see him again? And as she thought this, his face seemed to go before her eyes. They had been singing a little song the night before at the château,—

Si vous n'avez rien à me dire, pourquoi venir auprès de moi ?

it went. Dreams said nothing to her now. She looked at them in a sort of despair as they went by.

"Why does he come, why does he come?" sighed the little thing, clinging to the iron crank. "Why am I haunted like this?" She felt as if it was cruel—yes, cruel of Fate to mock her and tempt her thus; to have brought the fruit, sweet and ripe and tempting to her lips, and to whisper at the same time cruel warnings: "This is for others, not for you. This is for the other Catherine, who does not very much care—this will be for him some day when he chooses. Do you wish? You may wish, and wish, and wish, you will be no nearer—put out your hand and you will see all these beautiful, purple, sweet peaches turn into poisonous berries, bitter and sickening. And yet I did not go after it," thought the girl, with a passionate movement. "Why does this come to me, crossing my path to distract, to vex, to bewilder?" Catherine was but a child still: she leaned over the old moss-grown parapet of the well and let her tears drop deep, deep into it. What a still passage it was down into the cool heart of the earth. She heard a fresh bubble of water rippling at the bottom, and she watched her tears as they fell sparkling into the dark silent depths.

"Nobody will find them there," she said to herself, smiling sadly at the poor little conceit. "I will never cry again if I can help it, but if I cannot help it I will come here to cry."

And yet this poor little hopeless, sorrowful love of Catherine's was teaching and educating her, although she did not know it. She was only ashamed of it. The thought that they suspected it, that it was no chance which had caused them all to avoid Dick's name so carefully, made her shrink with shame. The poor little wistful silly thing, with the quick little fancies and warm tender heart, was changing day by day, making discoveries, suddenly understanding things she read, words people spoke. The whole pulse of life seemed to be beating more quickly. Something had come into her face which was not there a year ago. She was thinner, and the moulding of her two arched brows showed as it had not done before. Her little round mouth was longer and more finely drawn; her eyes looked you more straightly in the face through their soft gloom. She got up, hearing voices and footsteps approaching: it was the children, who came running along the pathway.

Henri was holding a great big nosegay, done up in stamped paper. It was chiefly made of marguerites, sorted into wheels, red, white, orange, violet. It was a prim-looking offering, with leaves and little buds at regular intervals, as Nature never intended them to grow.

"This is for you!" cried little Henri, triumphantly. "This beautiful big bouquet. Toto and M. Fontaine have brought it. You will let me smell it, won't you?"

"The flowers are magnificent," said Nanine, following panting and indignant. "M. Fontaine confided them to me; but Henri seized it and ran away. I do not like rude little boys."

"You must tell Monsieur Fontaine I am very much obliged to him," said Catherine. "And you can put it in water, if you like, Nanine."

"You must thank him yourself," said the little girl walking beside her. "I know you like marguerites. You wore some in your hair last night. They look pretty with your white muslin dresses."

Catherine followed the children sadly, walking under the song of birds and the glimmering green branches. She would have escaped, but Madame de Tracy, with Monsieur Fontaine and Toto, came to meet them; the châtelaine was calling out cheerfully and waving her parasol.

Fontaine sprang forward. He looked spruce as usual in his white linen dress; his panama was in his hand; he wore a double eyeglass like Jean de Tracy. "We are proud, mademoiselle, that you honour us by accepting the produce of our little garden," said Fontaine. "Toto and I cultivate our flowers with some care, and we feel more than repaid. . . ."

"Thank you," interrupted Catherine, mechanically. She spoke, looking away over the wall at some poplar-trees that were swaying in the wind. It brought with it a sound of the sea that seemed to fill the air.

"Accustomed as you must be to the magnificent products of your

Chatswors and Kieus," said Fontaine, "our poor marguerites must seem very insignificant. Such as they are, we have gathered our best to offer you."

He said it almost pathetically, and Catherine was touched. But how oddly people affect and change one another! This shy, frightened little girl became cold, dignified, absent in Monsieur Fontaine's presence, as she stood enduring rather than accepting his attentions.

"Thank you. They are very pretty," she repeated; "but I am sorry you should have gathered your best for me."

CHAPTER XI.

A PILGRIMAGE.

A CERTAIN expedition had long been arranged for the next day. The ladies wanted to shop, Tracy had business in Caen. They were all to go over and dine at the hotel and come home in the evening. Catherine begged Madame de Tracy to leave her behind. She was shy and out of spirits, and was glad when the elder lady acceded. Nanine and Henri were carried off; only Madelaine, Catherine, and the invisible Madame mère were left at home. In the silence of the house Catherine heard the deep voice resounding more than once.

Miss George went out soon after breakfast, leaving Madelaine with her nurse as usual. She remembered her promise to Reine, and there was something cordial and cheering in the Frenchwoman's kindness. The thought of the farm was always connected with brightness in Catherine's mind, and immediately after breakfast she set off along the fields to see her friend. Something was evidently contemplated at the farm. A cart was waiting in the courtyard as Catherine walked in; Dominique was standing at the old mare's head and affectionately rubbing her nose. Little Josette and Toto, hand in hand, were wandering up and down. Toto was magnificent in Sunday clothes. "Voyez comme Toto est beau," said Josette, pointing with her little finger and forgetting to be shy in her excitement. Reine was preparing a basketful of provisions in the kitchen—cream in a brass can, roast apples, galette, salad and cold meat, all nicely packed in white napkins, also a terrinée or rice pudding for the children, and a piled-up dish full of ripe figs and green leaves and grapes for dessert. Toto's Sunday clothes looked like a holiday expedition. His grandmother pleased herself by inventing little costumes for him. On this occasion he wore what she called a *turban écossais*. This Scotch turban was ornamented by long streamers, glass buttons, and straw tassels. He also wore a very short jacket and trousers of the same magnificent plaid. His hair was cropped quite close, so as to make his head look smooth and round like a ball. Toto himself was much pleased with his appearance, and gazed at his reflection approvingly in a tub of dirty water which was standing in a corner of the court.

"They will take me for a soldier, Josette," said he, strutting about.

"Come in, come in," cried Reine from her kitchen to Catherine, who was standing uncertain where to go.

A very odd and unexpected little revelation was awaiting Miss George (at least, so she thought it) as she came, with eyes dazzled by the sunny court, under the old stone porch into the dark kitchen, where Reine was standing, and where Petitpère had been eating his breakfast the time before. The odd-shaped shuttles for making string were hanging from the ceiling and swaying a little in the draught from the open door. There was the brass pan in the corner, which she had looked for; suddenly she recognized it all, the great carved cupboard with the hinges, the vine window looking across the blazing fields! Now she remembered in an instant where and when and how it was she had first seen Reine in her farm-kitchen—how could she have ever forgotten? Here was the picture Dick had shown her on his easel, only it was alive. The shuttles swayed, the light flickered on the brazen pan, one of the cupboard doors was swinging on its hinges, and Reine herself, with no hard black lines in her face, only smiles and soft changing shadows, came forward, tall and bright and kind, to meet her. So Dick had been here before her and painted his picture here where she was standing. When this little revelation came to her, Catherine, who had been attracted before, felt as if she loved Reine now for something more than her own sake. This was the explanation—it was all natural enough as she came to think of it, but it struck her like a miracle almost, worked for her benefit. She seized Reine by the arm; all the colour came rushing into her cheek. "Now I know where I have seen you," she cried. "Ah, Reine, how strangely things happen!"

"What do you mean?" said Reine, with a quick matter-of-fact glance as she shut down the cover of the basket.

Catherine went on, looking all about the place. "When did Mr. Butler paint you?—used you to sit to him?—was it not a beautiful picture? He showed it to us in his studio."

"It was like the kitchen," said Reine, not seeming much surprised, with another odd, reserved glance at Catherine. "I didn't think it very like me. I wanted him to paint the court-yard and the archway, with Dominique and Petitpère on the bench. A kitchen is always a kitchen. —Mademoiselle, how I wish you were coming with us to-day," she said, in another tone. "We are going to the chapel of the Deliverande."

Catherine did not answer, she had not done with her questions. Here at last was some one to whom she could talk without exciting suspicion. Any one may speak of a picture in an unconcerned tone of voice, of Miss Philomel's talent for music, of Strephon's odd-shaped crook, or Chloris's pretty little lambs, but they should choose their confidantes carefully. Let them beware of women of a certain age and sentimental turn; let them, above all, avoid persons also interested in music, and flocks, and shepherds' crooks, or woe betide any one's secret. I think

if Catherine had been quite silent, and never mentioned Dick's name, Reine would by degrees have guessed as much as she did the instant the little girl spoke. Miss George herself was not deficient in quickness, but she was preoccupied just now.

"How little I ever thought I should really know you," said Catherine.

"That is how things happen," said Reine. "It has been a great pleasure and happiness to me.—Mademoiselle, you have not said No. Will you not honour us by coming to-day? It might amuse you to see the chapel. They say that to-day anything is accorded that one asks for there. They say so to make people come perhaps," added the sceptic.

"Oh, Reine, what shall you ask for?" said Catherine, who believed everything.

"An explanation," said Reine, drily. "I have been expecting one some time. Et vous, mademoiselle?"

Catherine's colour rose again and fell. "One would never have the courage to ask for what one wished," she faltered. "Yes, I should like to come with you. I suppose Madame de Tracy will not mind."

"We can send a message by Dominique," said Reine; and so the matter was settled.

Petitpère appeared, brushing his tall beaver-hat, and then clambered with strong trembling hands into his place. The two women sat opposite to one another, on straw chairs. Josette and Toto had a little plank to themselves. The children were delighted and clapped their hands at a windmill, an old cow, a flight of crows; so did Catherine, at their request. Something like a reaction had come after her weariness, and then she had had a drop of water, poor little fool, when she did not expect it. Reine smiled to see her so gay, and then sighed as she thought of former expeditions to the Deliverande.

The old farm stood baking in the sun. The cart rolled on, past stubble-fields and wide horizons of corn, and clouds, and meadow-land; the St. Claire was over, and the colza had been reaped. They passed through villages with lovely old church towers and Norman arched windows. They passed acacia-trees, with their bright scarlet berries, hanging low garden walls. They passed more farms, with great archways and brilliant vines wreathing upon the stone. The distance was a great panorama of sky and corn and distant sea. The country-folks along the road cried out to them as they passed, "*Vous voilà en route, père Chrétien,*" "*Amusez-vous bien,*" and so on. Other carts came up to them as they approached the chapel, and people went walking in the same direction. They passed little roadside inns and buvettes for the convenience of the neighbours, and here and there little altars. Once, on the summit of a hill, they came to a great cross, with a life-size figure nailed upon it. Two women were sitting on the stone step at its foot, and the cloud-drifts were tossing beyond it. It was very awful, Catherine thought.

An hour later she was sitting in the chapel of the Deliverande. In a dark, incense-scented place, full of flames, and priests, and music, and

crowding country-people, a gorgeously dressed altar was twinkling and glittering in her eyes, where the Virgin of the Deliverande in stiff embroideries was standing, with a blaze of tapers burning among the fresh flowers. Voices of boys and girls were loudly chanting the hymn to the Virgin in the darkness behind it. Catherine had groped her way in the dazzling obscurity to some seats, and when she could see she found the children side by side in front of her, and she saw Reine on her knees, and Petitpère's meek grey head bowed. One other thing she saw, which seemed to her sad and almost cruel,—poor old Nanon Lefebvre creeping up the centre aisle, and setting her basket on the ground, and then kneeling, and with difficulty kissing the cross let into the marble pavement in front of the altar, and saying a prayer, and slinking quickly away. Poor old Nanon! the penances of poverty and old age were also allotted to her. Just over Catherine's head, on a side-altar, stood a placid saint, with outstretched arms, at whose feet numberless little offerings had been placed—orange-flowers, and wreaths of immortelles, and a long string of silver hearts. Catherine, who had almost thought it wrong to come into a Popish chapel, found herself presently wondering whether by offering up a silver heart she could ever ease the dull aching in her own. It would have been no hard matter at this time before her marriage to bring this impressionable little sheep into the fold of the ancient Church. But Monsieur le Curé of Petitport, who was of an energetic and decided turn of mind, was away, and the gentle old Abbé Verdier, who had taken his place for a time, did not dream of conversions. Catherine changed very much after her marriage, and the opportunity was lost.

Petitpère having concluded his devotions, presently announced in a loud whisper that he should go and see about the *déjeûner*; he took the children with him. Reine and Catherine stayed a little longer. Catherine was fascinated by the odd signs, the barbarous fantastic images, which expressed the faith and patience and devotion of these simple people.

"Venez," said Reine at last, laying a kind heavy hand on Catherine's shoulder, and the two went out again through the porch into the white daylight.

The inn was crowded with pilgrims, who, whether or not their petitions were granted, were breakfasting with plenty of wine and very good appetites, in the quaint old stone kitchen. The cook was busy at his frizzling saucapans at a fireplace in the centre. The country-folks were sitting all about unpacking their baskets, opening cider-bottles. There was a great copper fountain let into the massive wall, from which the people filled their jugs with water; a winding staircase in the thickness of the wall led to the upper story.

"Par ici," said Petitpère, triumphantly leading the way: he had engaged a private room in Catherine's honour, for he had some tact, and had been used to his daughter-in-law's refinements, and he said he thought mademoiselle would not care to dine below with all those noisy people.

The private room had a couple of beds in it and various pictures—of the Emperor at Austerlitz, and three shepherdesses in red bodices and coloured religious prints alternately; it had also a window opening upon the little *place*, and exactly opposite the chapel where services were constantly going on.

Reine laid the cloth, piling up the fruit in the centre, and pushing the table into the window. Petitpère made the salad very quickly and dexterously, and uncorked the wine and the cider. Reine had no fear of his transgressing before Catherine. "If my aunts were to see me now," thought Catherine, and she smiled to herself as she thought of Mrs. Buckingham's face of apoplectic horror at the sight of Petitpère's blouse at the head of the table; of Lady Farebrother trembling in horror of popery upon Mount Ephraim. It was amusing to watch all the tide of white caps and blouses down below; it was odd and exciting to be dining in this quaint old tower with all the people shouting and laughing underneath.

It was not so great a novelty to Reine as to Catherine; she was a little silent, and once she sighed, but she was full of kind care for them all, and bright and responding. "Petitpère," she said, "give *mademoiselle* some wine, and Toto and Josette too."

"Let us drink to the health of the absent," said Petitpère, solemnly.

But Catherine gave a sudden exclamation, and put down her glass untouched. "Look, ah, look," she cried, pointing through the window. "Who is that?" She cried out; she had feared it was a vision that would vanish instantly as it seemed to have come. Who was that standing there in a straw hat, looking as she had seen him look a hundred times before? It was no dream, no "longing passion unfulfilled" taking form and substance for a time. It was Richard Butler, and no other, who was standing there in the middle of the *place*, looking up curiously at their window. Petitpère knew him directly.

"C'est Monsieur Richard," he said, hospitably, and as if it was a matter of course. "Reine, my child, look there. He must come up. C'est un monsieur Anglais qui fait de la peinture," he explained hastily to Catherine. "But you recognize him. The English are acquainted among each other."

Recognize him! Dick was so constantly in Catherine's thoughts that, if he had suddenly appeared in the place of the Virgin on the high altar of the chapel, I think she would scarcely have been very much surprised after the first instant. That he should be there seemed a matter of course; that he should be absent was the only thing that she found it so impossible to believe. As for Reine, she sat quite still with her head turned away; she did not move until the door opened and Dick came in, stooping under the low archway. He was just as usual; they might have been in Mrs. Butler's drawing-room in Eaton Square Catherine thought as he shook hands first with one and then with another.

"Did you not know I was coming to Tracy?" he said to Catherine.

"I found nobody there and no preparations just now, but they told me you were here, and I got Pélottier to give me a lift, for I thought you would bring me back," he added, turning to Reine. She looked up at last and seemed trying to speak indifferently.

"You know we are going back in a cart," Reine answered harshly.

"Do you think I am likely to have been dazzled by the splendour of Pélottier's gig?" Dick asked.

Reine did not like being laughed at. "You used to object to many things," she said, vexed, and then melting. "Such as they are, you know you are welcome to any of ours."

"Am I?" Dick answered, looking kindly at her.

Catherine envied Reine at that instant. She had nothing, not even a flower of her own to offer Dick, except, indeed, she thought, with a little smile, that great bouquet out of poor Monsieur Fontaine's garden.

If it was a sort of *Misere* before, what a triumphal service was not the little evening prayer to Catherine! They went into the chapel after dinner for a minute or two. Sitting there in the darkness, she thought, silly child, that heaven itself would not seem more beautiful with all the radiance of the crystal seas and rolling suns than did this little shrine. To her as to Petitpère the Deliverance was a little heaven just now, but for Petitpère Dick's presence or absence added but little to its splendour. There was Dick, meanwhile, a shadowy living figure in the dimness. Catherine could see him from where she sat by Reine. How happy she was. In all this visionary love of hers, only once had she thought of herself—that day when she sat by the well—at other times she had only thought of Dick, and poured out all the treasure in her kind heart before him. That he should prize it she never expected, that he should return it had never once crossed her mind. All her longing was to see him and hear of him, and some day, perhaps, to do him some service, to be a help, to manifest her love in secret alms of self-devotion and fidelity and charity. She looked up at the string of silver hearts; no longer did they seem to her emblems of sad hearts hung up in bitterness, but tokens of gladness placed there before the shrine.

Petitpère was driving, and proposed to go back another way. The others sat face to face as they had come. The afternoon turned grey and a little chilly. Reine took Josette on her knee; Catherine wrapped Toto in her shawl. Dick had asked Catherine all the questions people ask by this time. He didn't see her doubtful face when he told her he had not waited for an answer to the letter announcing his coming.

"Madame de Tracy isn't like you, Mademoiselle Chrézien," said Dick. "She doesn't snub people when they ask for hospitality."

It struck Catherine a little oddly, afterwards, that Dick should speak to Reine in this reproachful tone, that Reine should answer so shortly and yet so softly, so that one could hardly have told whether she was pleased or angry—at the time she only thought that he was there. Yesterday she had longed for a sight of the lines his pen had scratched upon a paper,

to-day she was sitting opposite to him with no one to say one word. Petitpère's short cut was longer than it should have been, but Catherine would have gone on for ever if she had held the reins. All the grey sky encompassed them—all the fields spread into the dusk—the soft fresh winds came from a distance. The pale yellow shield of the horizon was turning to silver. The warm lights were coming out in the cottage lattices. As the evening closed in, they were sprinkled like glow-worms here and there in the country. Sometimes the cart passed under trees arching black against the pale sky; once they crossed a bridge with a rush of water below. There was not much colour anywhere, nor form in the twilight, but exquisite tone and sentiment everywhere.

They passed one or two groups strolling and sitting out in the twilight as they approached Petitport, and the rushing of the sea seemed coming up to meet them at times. They were all very silent. Petitpère had been humming a little tune to himself for the last half-hour; Dick had spoken to Reine once or twice, always in that bantering tone; to Catherine he was charming, gay, and kind and courteous, and like himself in short.

"Are you going to stay here, Mr. Butler?" asked Catherine once, suddenly.

"Only a day or two," Dick said abruptly. "I must go back for Beamish's wedding. I came because—because I could not keep away any longer, Miss George. Here we are at the château."

"There is M. le Maire," cried Petitpère, pulling up abruptly.

Fontaine had come down to look for Toto, who was asleep and very tired. The *turban écossais* slid off the little nodding head as Dick hauled the child to his father over the side of the cart.

"Good-night, Reine, and thank you," Catherine said. "It has been—oh, such a happy day!"

Fontaine only waited to assist Miss George to jump down, to express his surprise and delight at Mr. Butler's return, and then hurried off with his little sleepy Toto. "I shall come back in the evening," cried the maire, going off and waving his hat.

"Monsieur Richard, you also get down here," said Petitpère, growing impatient at the horse's head, for Dick delayed and stood talking to Reine.

The two had been alone with Josette in the cart for a minute. Now Richard took Reine's unwilling hand in his, and looked her fixedly in the face, but he only said, "Au revoir, Mademoiselle Reine, is it not so?"

Reine seemed to hesitate. "Au revoir," she faltered at last, in the pathetic voice, and she looked away.

Catherine was safely landed down below, and heard nothing. "He came because he could not help it," she was saying to herself over and over again. For the first time a wild wondering thrill of hope came into her head. It was a certainty while it lasted—she never afterwards forgot that minute. She stood outside the iron gate, the moon was rising palely, the evening seemed to thrill with a sudden tremor, the earth shook under her feet. While it lasted the certainty was complete, the moment

was perfect. How many such are there even in the most prosperous lives? This one minute lasted until the cart drove away.

As Catherine and Dick were walking slowly across the court together he stopped short. "I know I can trust you, Miss George," he said. "I—I think you must have guessed how things are with me," and a bright look came into his face. "Pray do not say anything here. Reine is a thousand times too good for me," he said with a shake in his voice, "or for them, and they wouldn't understand; and I can't afford to marry yet, but I know I shall win her in time. Dear Miss George, I know you will keep my secret. We have always been friends, have we not?" and he held out his hand.

"Yes," Catherine said, in a dreamy sort of way, as if she was thinking of something else. Friends! If love is the faith, then friendship is the charity of life. Catherine said yes, very softly, very gently, and put her hand into his, and then went away into the house. There was no bitterness in her heart, no pang of vanity wounded just then; only an inexpressible sadness had succeeded that instant of foolish mad certainty. The real depth, and truth, and sweetness of her nature seemed stirred and brought to light by the blow which had shattered the frail fabric she had erected for herself. But when she went upstairs into her room, the first thing she saw was the great nosegay of marguerites which the children had placed upon her table, and then she began to cry.

She was quite calm when she came down again. Dick tried to speak to her again, but he was somehow enveloped by Madame de Tracy, who was all the more glad to see him because she had written to him not to come.

After dinner they all began to dance again as they had done the night before, and Marthe went to the piano and began to play for them. Ernestine would have liked, if possible, that all the gentlemen should have danced with her, but that could not be; so she was content to let the two little demoiselles de Vernon share in the amusements. Dick came and asked Miss George to dance, but she shook her head and said she was tired. The little ball lasted some ten minutes perhaps, and ended as suddenly as it had begun. Marthe closed the piano with a sigh: she had very brilliant and supple fingers, and played with grace and sentiment; it was a sort of farewell to which they had all been dancing. Ernestine put one hand into her husband's arm, and one into Dick's. "Come," she said, dragging them out through the open window.

"Jeunesse! jeunesse!" said the countess kindly to Catherine as the young people went scampering and flitting across the grass and disappeared in the winding walks of the garden. Catherine answered with a faint smile. Madame de Tracy took up the newspaper and drew her chair to the lamp, and then it was that Catherine slid quietly out of the room and crept along the front of the house, and suddenly began flying down the avenue to the straight terrace walk, from whence she could see the sea gleaming silver under the vast purple-black dome of night. It was full moon again. All the light rippled over the country. The old pots

on the parapet were turned to silver. The trees shivered and seemed to shake the moonlight from their twigs and branches. Once the far-away voices reached her through the silence; but poor little Catherine only shivered when she heard them. She felt so utterly forsaken and out of tune and harmony in this vast harmony, that she found herself clinging to the old pot with the lichen creeping up the outer edge, and crying and crying as if her heart must break. Poor little moonstruck creature, shedding her silver tears in the moonlight; she was like a little lichen herself, with her soft hands grasping the cold stone and crying over them and asking them for sympathy. She shivered, but she did not heed the chill; she seemed engulfed as it were in the great bitter sea of passionate regret and shame, struggling and struggling, with no one to help. The moon travelled on, and now came streaming full upon the terrace, changing everything fantastically. The gleam of the lamp by which Madame de Tracy was standing pierced through the trees. Sometimes a bird stirred in its sleep; sometimes a dog barked in the valley.

The voices which had sounded so distant, presently came nearer and nearer: shadows, figures, sudden bursts of laughter, the shrill exclamations, the deeper tones of the men. Catherine looking up, saw them all at the end of the walk: she could not face them; she started and fled. The others saw the white figure flitting before them.

"It is a ghost!" some one cried.

"It is Miss George," said Dick.

Catherine had no thought but to avoid them all just then as she went flying along, only as she was turning up the dark pathway leading to the house a figure suddenly emerged into the moonlight. It was no ghost. It was only Fontaine, with his eye-glasses gleaming in the moon rays. But she started and looked back, thinking in vague despair where she should go to escape. Fontaine seemed to guess her thought,—

"Will you not remain one instant with me, mademoiselle?" he said. "I was looking for you. Madame de Tracy told me I might find you here."

He spoke oddly. There was a tone in his voice she had never heard before. What had come to him? Suddenly she heard him speaking again, thoroughly in earnest; and when people are in earnest, their words come strongly and simply. All his affectations had left him, his voice sounded almost angry and fierce.

"I know that to you we country folks seem simple, and perhaps ridiculous at times," he said. "Perhaps you compare us with others, and to our disadvantage. But the day might come when you would not regret having accepted the protection and the name of an honest man," cried Fontaine. "Madame de Tracy has told me of your circumstances—your sisters. You know me, and you know my son. The affection of a child, the devotion of a lifetime, count for something, do they not? And this at least I offer you," said Fontaine, "in all good faith and sincerity. You have no mother to whom I can address myself, and I come to you, mademoiselle; and I think you owe me an answer."

There was a moment's silence; a little wind came rustling through the trees, bringing with it a sound of distant voices and laughter. Catherine shivered again; it sounded so sad and so desolate. She found herself touched and surprised and frightened all at once by Fontaine's vehemence. In an hour of weakness he had found her. "Take it, take it," some voice seemed saying to her, "give friendship, since love is not for you!" It seemed like a strange unbelievable dream to be there, making up her mind, while the young people, laughing still and talking, were coming nearer and nearer. Suddenly Fontaine saw a pale wistful face in the moonlight, two hands put up helplessly. "Take me away, oh, take me away!" she said, with a sudden appealing movement. "I can do nothing for you in return, not even love you."

"Do not say that, my child," said Fontaine. "Do not be afraid, all will be well."

A minute later they were standing before Madame de Tracy. "She consents," said Fontaine; "you were wrong, madame. How shall I ever thank you for making me know her?"

It was Dick who first told Reine the news of the engagement. "I don't half like her to marry that fellow, poor little thing," he said. Reine, who was churning,—she always made a point of working harder when Dick was present than at any other time—looked at him over her barrel. "I should not have done it in her place," she said, "but then we are different." Dick thought her less kind at that minute than he had ever known her before.

Love is the faith, and friendship should be the charity of life, and yet Reine in her own happiness could scarcely forgive Catherine for what she had done. Guessing and fearing what she did, she judged her as she would have judged herself. She forgot that she was a strong woman, and Catherine a child still in many things, and lonely and unhappy, while Reine was a happy woman now, at last, for the first time. For her pride had given way, and the struggle was over. Reine, who would not come unwelcome into any family, who still less would consent to a secret engagement, had succumbed suddenly and entirely when she saw Dick standing before her again. She had not answered his letter telling her that he would come and see her once more. She had vowed that she would never think of him again. When he had gone away the first time without speaking, she had protested in her heart; but when he spoke to her at last, the protest died away on her lips, and in her heart too. And so it came about that these two were standing on either side of the churn, talking over their own hopes and future, and poor little Catherine's too. With all her hardness—it came partly from a sort of vague remorse—Reine's heart melted with pity when she thought of her friend, and instinctively guessed at her story.

"Why do you ask me so many questions about Miss George?" Dick said at last. "Poor child, she deserves a better fate."

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